The Badminton Library

OF

SPORTS AND PASTIMES

EDITED BY

HIS GRACE THE (EIGHTH) DUKE OF BEAUFORT, K.G.

ASSISTED BY ALFRED E. T. WATSON

DANCING



SIR ROGER DE COVERLEY, 1820

DANCING

Frazer

BY

MRS. LILLY GROVE, F.R.G.S.

AND OTHER WRITERS

WITH MUSICAL EXAMPLES



ILLUSTRATED BY PERCY MACQUOID

AND BY NUMEROUS REPRODUCTIONS OF ENGRAVINGS
PRINTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

New Impression

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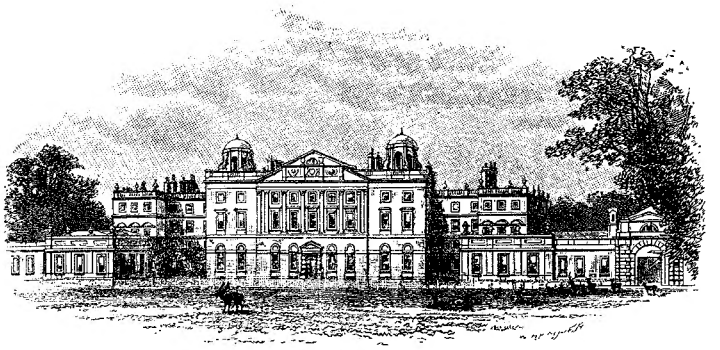
H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES

BADMINTON: *May* 1885.

HAVING received permission to dedicate these volumes, the BADMINTON LIBRARY of SPORTS and PASTIMES, to HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES, I do so feeling that I am dedicating them to one of the best and keenest sportsmen of our time. I can say, from personal observation, that there is no man who can extricate himself from a bustling and pushing crowd of horsemen, when a fox breaks covert, more dexterously and quickly than His Royal Highness; and that when hounds run hard over a big country, no man can take a line of his own and live with them better. Also, when the wind has been blowing hard, often have I seen His Royal Highness knocking over driven grouse and partridges and high-rocketing pheasants in first-rate

workmanlike style. He is held to be a good yachtsman, and as Commodore of the Royal Yacht Squadron is looked up to by those who love that pleasant and exhilarating pastime. His encouragement of racing is well known, and his attendance at the University, Public School, and other important Matches testifies to his being, like most English gentlemen, fond of all manly sports. I consider it a great privilege to be allowed to dedicate these volumes to so eminent a sportsman as His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and I do so with sincere feelings of respect and esteem and loyal devotion.

BEAUFORT.



BADMINTON

PREFACE

A FEW LINES only are necessary to explain the object with which these volumes are put forth. At the time when the Badminton Library was started no modern encyclopædia existed to which the inexperienced man, who sought guidance in the practice of the various British Sports and Pastimes, could turn for information. Some books there were on Hunting, some on Racing, some on Lawn Tennis, some on Fishing, and so on; but one Library, or succession of volumes, which treated of the Sports and Pastimes indulged in by Englishmen—and women—was wanting. The Badminton Library was produced to supply the want. Of the imperfections

which must be found in the execution of such a design we are conscious. Experts often differ. But this we may say, that those who are seeking for knowledge on any of the subjects dealt with will find the results of many years' experience written by men who are in every case adepts at the Sport or Pastime of which they write. It is to point the way to success to those who are ignorant of the sciences they aspire to master, and who have no friend to help or coach them, that these volumes are written.

To those who have worked hard to place simply and clearly before the reader that which he will find within the best thanks of the Editor are due. That it has been no slight labour to supervise all that has been written he must acknowledge; but it has been a labour of love, and very much lightened by the courtesy of the Publisher, by the unflinching, indefatigable assistance of the Sub-Editor, and by the intelligent and able arrangement of each subject by the various writers, who are so thoroughly masters of the subjects of which they treat. The reward we all hope to reap is that our work may prove useful to this and future generations.

BEAUFORT.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
II.	THE DANCES OF ANTIQUITY	15
III.	THE DANCES OF SAVAGES	65
IV.	THE RITUAL DANCE	93
V.	ENGLISH DANCES	124
VI.	THE DANCE IN SCOTLAND, IRELAND, AND WALES	179
VII.	GIPSY, HUNGARIAN, BOHEMIAN, RUSSIAN, AND POLISH DANCES	213
VIII.	THE DANCE IN FRANCE	242
IX.	THE DANCE IN GERMANY, HOLLAND, BELGIUM, SCANDINAVIA, AND LAPLAND	289
X.	THE DANCE IN PORTUGAL, SPAIN, AND ITALY	306
XI.	THE DANCES OF THE EAST: INDIA, PERSIA, CHINA, JAPAN	344
XII.	THE BALLET	360
XIII.	THE PRACTICAL USE OF DANCING *From Notes by Mrs. Wordsworth.*	381

CHAPTER PAGE

XIV. TIME AND RHYTHM OF THE DANCE . . . 387
By Miss Middleton.

XV. A RETROSPECT 401
By the Honourable Mrs. Armytage.

XVI. BALLS: HOSTESSES AND GUESTS . . . 411
By the Countess of Ancaster.

DESCRIPTION OF DANCES 419

INDEX 429

ILLUSTRATIONS

(REPRODUCED BY MESSRS. WALKER & BOUTALL)

FULL PAGE

SIR ROGER DE COVERLEY, 1820 . . . . . *Frontispiece*
Percy Macquoid.

THE SKIRT DANCE . . . . . *To face p.* 6
Percy Macquoid.

A NAUTCH AT BOMBAY . . . . . ,, 10
From a Print after Prince Alexis Soltykoff.

RUSTIC DANCE IN HOLLAND . . . . . ,, 12
From an Engraving after David Teniers.

DANCING GIRLS AT AN ANCIENT EGYPTIAN BANQUET (THEBES) . . . . . ,, 22
From a coloured Egyptian Wall-painting in the British Museum.

THE DANCE ROUND THE GOLDEN CALF . . . ,, 26
From an Engraving after Nicholas Poussin.

SALOME BEFORE HEROD . . . . . ,, 30
From an Engraving after Karel van Mander.

THE BALL-DANCE IN ANCIENT GREECE . . . ,, 40
Percy Macquoid.

A CEREMONY OF THE 'CLOWNS' ON THE MORNING OF THE HAY-A-MASHEQUE DANCE IN ZUÑI . ,, 84
Walter Fewkes.

TAHITIAN DANCE . . . . . , 88
From an Engraving by F. Bartolozzi.

THE MAYPOLE . . . . . ,, 146
From an Engraving after Joseph Nash.

MILKMAIDS' DANCE ON MAY DAY . . . . . *To face p.* 148
From the Vauxhall Painting by F. Hayman.

THE CUSHION DANCE, ELIZABETHAN, 1570 . . . ,, 158
Percy Macquoid.

KING CHARLES II. AND PRINCESS ELIZABETH DANCING AT THE HAGUE . . . . . ,, 162
From the Picture by Janssens at Windsor Castle.

THE PENNY WEDDING . . . . . ,, 184
From an Engraving after Sir David Wilkie.

IRISH JIG . . . . . ,, 206
From an Engraving after Wrightson.

WALLACHIAN SOLDIERS DANCING TO TSIGANE ACCOMPANIMENT . . . . . ,, 214
From a Print after D. A. M. Raffet.

FRENCH BALL, CIRCA 1660 . . . . . ,, 248
From an Engraving by Abraham Bosse.

THE PAVANE AT THE COURT OF HENRI III., CIRCA 1580 . . . . . ,, 254
Percy Macquoid.

A STRANGE 'CORANTO' . . . . . ,, 256
An incident in the life of Claude Duval, after W. P. Frith, R.A.

THE MENUET, 1720 . . . . . ,, 260
Percy Macquoid

THE GAVOTTE, 1780 . . . . . ,, 264
Percy Macquoid.

BALL GIVEN BY ALBRECHT IV., GRAND DUKE OF BAVARIA . . . . . ,, 290
From an Engraving by Martin Zatzinger, dated 1500.

THE PRODIGAL SON . . . . . ,, 292
After Karel van Mander.

THE WALTZ . . . . . ,, 298
Percy Macquoid.

STATE BALL AT AMSTERDAM, 1768 . . . . ,, 300
From an Engraving by R. Vinkeles.

SWORD DANCE OF VIKINGS ROUND THE SACRED HORNS, CIRCA 900 . . . . . ,, 302
Percy Macquoid.

NORWEGIAN DANCE . . . . . ,, 304
After A. Tidemand.

EL BOLERO . . . . . ,, 322
From a Print after J. F. Lewis.

THE CARDINALS OF NARBONNE AND OF ST. SÉVERIN DANCING A PAVANE BEFORE LOUIS XII. AT MILAN, 1499 . . . . . *To face p.* 332
Percy Macquoid.

SALTARELLO AT ROME . . . . . ,, 334
From an Engraving after A. C. H. Haudebourt.

TARANTELLA AT NAPLES . . . . . ,, 340
From an Etching by B. Pinelli.

SIGNORA BACCELLI . . . . . ,, 372

A DANCE FAN . . . . . ,, 378

THE BALLET . . . . . ,, 380
Percy Macquoid.

QUEEN CHARLOTTE'S BIRTH-NIGHT BALL AT ST. JAMES'S . . . . . ,, 406
From an Engraving after Daniel Dodd.

THE PAS DE QUATRE . . . . . ,, 422
Percy Macquoid.

LE BAL PARÉ . . . . . ,, 424
From an Engraving after A. de St. Aubin.

IN TEXT

PAGE

VIGNETTE . . . . . *Title*
Percy Macquoid.

THE DANCING LESSON 3
From an Engraving after P. Canot, 1745.

VENETIAN WEDDING DANCE 9
From a Woodcut by Jost Amman, about 1570.

LA JOK—WALLACHIAN DANCE 13
After D. A. M. Raffet, 1837.

PROVINCIAL DANCE IN ITALY 14
From an Etching by B. Pinelli, 1814.

TRAJAN DANCING BEFORE THE EGYPTIAN DEITIES . . 17

THE DERVISHES DANCING IN EGYPT 18
From an Engraving after C. N. Cochin, 1787.

GHÁZEEYEHS OF ROSETTA 21
From a Print after E. Prisse, 1848.

DANCE OF FELLAHS OF UPPER EGYPT 22
From a Print after Rifaud.

PAGE

MASK AND IVORY CLAPPERS FOUND BY PROFESSOR W. M. FLINDERS PETRIE 23
Reproduced by permission.

ASSYRIAN MUMMERS 23

DAVID DANCING BEFORE THE ARK 27
From an Engraving after Domenichino.

SALOME DANCING ON HER HANDS BEFORE HEROD . . . 31
From an Illuminated Manuscript of the Fourteenth Century.

DANCE OF APOLLO AND THE MUSES 35
From an Engraving after Giulio Romano.

CYCLIC OR DITHYRAMBIC CHORUS MOVING ROUND THE ALTAR OF DIONYSOS 37
From Schreiber-Anderson's 'Atlas of Classical Antiquities,' by permission of Messrs. Macmillan & Co. and from the German publisher, Arthur Seemann, Leipzig.

THE PYRRHIC CHORUS 43
From Schreiber-Anderson's 'Atlas of Classical Antiquities,' by permission of Messrs. Macmillan & Co. and from the German publisher, Arthur Seemann, Leipzig.

GIRLS LEADING THESEUS—DANCE OF CASOS 45
From an archaic Vase.

GIRL IN ARMOUR, DANCING 47
From a Greek Vase-painting, about 450 B.C.

MÆNADS DANCING 49

GIRLS DANCING LIKE BIRDS 51
From a Vase-painting.

CURETES DANCING AND BEATING ON THEIR SHIELDS SO AS TO DROWN THE CRIES OF THE INFANT ZEUS 53
From a Terra-cotta Relief.

DANCE OF THE ISLAND OF JAMAICA 66
From an Engraving after A. Brunais.

BUFFALO DANCE 67
From Catlin's 'North American Indian Portfolio.'

BALL-PLAY DANCE 68
From Catlin's 'North American Indian Portfolio.'

SCALP DANCE OF THE DAKOTAS 69
From 'Indian Tribes of the United States.'

BEAR DANCE 78
From Catlin's 'North American Indian Portfolio.'

A DANCING-DRESS IN CENTRAL BRAZIL 79
By permission from Prof. von den Steinen.

SNOW-SHOE DANCE 81

PAGE

AFGHAN NATIONAL DANCE 86

AFRICAN DANCE OF MAN AND WOMAN WITH SWORD AND SPEAR 87

THE KUKRI DANCE AT ASSAM 89

MIRIAM'S DANCE 95
From an Engraving after William Hensel.

MEDIÆVAL DANCING LEGEND 101
From a Woodcut in the 'Liber Chronicarum Mundi,' 1493.

EL BAILE DE LOS SEISES IN THE CATHEDRAL OF SEVILLE BEFORE THE HOLY SACRAMENT 107
(*After Gustave Doré.*) *By permission of Messrs. Sampson Low, Marston & Co.*

A FUNERAL JOTA 117
(*After Gustave Doré.*) *From Ch. Davillier's 'Spain,' by permission of Messrs. Bickers & Son.*

DANCE OF HOWLING DERVISHES 119
From an Engraving after C. N. Cochin, 1787.

DANCE OF TURNING DERVISHES 120
From an Engraving after C. N. Cochin, 1787.

LA TARASQUE 121

SAILOR'S HORNPIPE 125
From an Engraving after J. H. Ramberg, circa 1800.

TUMBLERS AND JUGGLERS 130
From Eccleston's 'English Antiquities,' 1847

KEMP'S DANCE FROM LONDON TO NORWICH IN 1599 . . . 139

FROM A PRINT (DATED 1794) OF A PAINTED WINDOW THEN AT BETLEY, STAFFORDSHIRE 145

DANCE OF PEASANTS ON MAY DAY 153
From Queen Mary's Psalter.

THE COUNTRY DANCE 163
From an Engraving after William Hogarth.

SWORD DANCE 174
From Eccleston's 'English Antiquities,' 1847.

SCOTTISH REEL 188
From an Etching by D. Deuchar, 1784.

SCOTTISH REEL 197
From an Engraving after J. H. Ramberg circa 1800.

A GIPSY DANCING THE VITO SEVILLANO 216
(*After Gustave Doré.*) *From Ch. Davillier's 'Spain,' by permission of Messrs. Bickers & Son.*

GIPSY DANCE 222
From an Engraving after Marie Weigmann.

PAGE

HUNGARIAN CSÁRDÁS 224
From an Engraving after J. H. Ramberg, circa 1800.

POLISH DANCE 234
From an Etching by J. A. Atkinson.

RUSSIAN WEDDING DANCE 237
From an Engraving after J. B. Le Prince, 1767.

HORSE QUADRILLE 243

TORCH DANCE AT THE COURT OF BURGUNDY (ANNO 1463) . 251

GAILLARDE 253
From the 'Orchésographie.'

GIVING A HAND IN A MENUET 258
From an Engraving after B. Dandridge, 1737.

LADY GIVING BOTH HANDS IN A MENUET 259
From an Engraving after B. Dandridge, 1737.

GENTLEMAN 'WALKING' THE MENUET 260
From an Engraving after Watteau.

THE QUADRILLE.—FIGURE 1: LE PANTALON 281
From Heath's 'Northern Looking-Glass,' 1825.

THE QUADRILLE.—FIGURE 2: L'ETÉ 281
From Heath's 'Northern Looking-Glass,' 1825.

THE QUADRILLE.—FIGURE 3: LA POULE 282
From Heath's 'Northern Looking-Glass,' 1825.

THE QUADRILLE.—FIGURE 4: LA TRÉNISE 282
From Heath's 'Northern Looking-Glass,' 1825.

THE QUADRILLE.—FIGURE 5: LA FINALE 283
From Heath's 'Northern Looking-Glass,' 1825.

SIXTEENTH-CENTURY PEASANTS' DANCE IN GERMANY . . 294
From an Engraving by F. Brunn.

THE RING DANCE IN GERMANY, FIFTEENTH CENTURY . . 295
From an Engraving by Israhel van Meckenen.

PEASANTS DANCING IN GERMANY 297
From an Engraving after Cornélis Bega, about 1645.

ALLEMANDE 300
From an Engraving after C. Brandoin, 1772.

THE EGG DANCE IN HOLLAND 301
From an Engraving after Theodor de Bry, 1611.

EL FANDANGO 321
From a Print by Jean Victor Adam, about 1840.

SICILIANA 337
From an Engraving after E. H. Pingret.

PAGE

TAMBOURINE DANCE 338
From an Etching by Jacques Callot, about 1633.

TARANTELLA 339
From an Engraving by F. Bartolozzi, after W. Locke.

AN EASTERN WOMAN DANCING BEFORE HER MASTER . . . 345
From an Engraving by G. Vitalba, after Francis Smith, 1769.

NAUTCHEES. 346

FIRST FOUR FIGURES OF THE CHINESE RITUAL DANCE . . 353
From 'Chinese Music,' by J. A. van Aalst, Shanghai, 1884.

CHINESE RITUAL DANCE 354
From 'Chinese Music,' by J. A. van Aalst, Shanghai, 1884.

JAPANESE FAN DANCE 358
From a Japanese Painting.

VESTRIS DANCING THE GOOSE-STEP 366
From an Engraving by F. Bartolozzi, after George Dance, 1781.

CHOREGRAPHY 371

GREEK DANCING LESSON 372
From a Vase-painting in the British Museum, about 450 B.C.

GROWN LADIES TAUGHT TO DANCE 373
From an Engraving after J. Collett, circa 1769.

GROWN GENTLEMEN TAUGHT TO DANCE 374
From an Engraving after J. Collett, 1768

HIGHLAND DANCING LESSON 374
From a Print by Frederick Taylor, 1844.

THE DANCING LESSON 375
From an Engraving after F. Heilbuth.

LA ZAMACUECA 376

EGYPTIAN CLAPPERS 377

LA DANSE DANS LE JARDIN DU PLAISIR 379
From a manuscript 'Le Roman de la Rose' in the British Museum.

AN ARTISTIC GROUP 381

GRACEFUL MOVEMENTS—NO. 1 382

GRACEFUL MOVEMENTS—NO. 2 383

CRETAN GARLAND DANCE 385

GREEK CHAIN DANCE 386

THE FIRST QUADRILLE AT ALMACK'S 403
Taken from 'Le Bon Genre' Prints, published at the end of the eighteenth century.

THE COTILLON 425
After J. Collett.

DANCING

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

If the Dance cannot be called a sport, it certainly is a pastime; and as the Badminton Library treats of 'Sports and Pastimes,' the inclusion of Dancing will be held excusable. Many people will be surprised that the subject could offer sufficient material for a volume, having probably regarded the dance as the amusement of the frivolous: they are apt to resent its appearance on the stage, and would relegate it to the pantomime or the light opera, while the professional dancer is looked upon as one who has sadly misapplied talents which might have won reputation in some worthier path of life. At best dancing is tolerated by many as childish; at worst it is condemned as immoral. This latter feeling is a survival of the Puritanical spirit which has so much to answer for in the suppression of innocent amusements. It was the abuse of the practices which led to the bitter reaction against 'play-acting, dancing, and other carnal sports;' a craze carried to such an extent that when Margaret of Valois, who married James V. of Scotland, danced the salta, and died a few days after from consumption, some of the quasi-pious folk of Edinburgh are said to have 'regarded her death as a celestial punishment for having gyrated in that naughty French dance.' In this age, where the current of research is

set so strongly in the careful seeking after truth, the claims of the dance on the consideration of the British reading world must rest on a broader basis than that of being a mere amusement for the light-minded, and it is the object of the present volume to show that those claims are justified.

The dance is so general that there is no one who cannot, from his own experience or observation, furnish at least some examples of it, so that there is no need to begin, as in the case of less familiar pastimes, with a definition of the word dancing in its modern acceptation, and as understood in this country. When, however, it comes to a description of the dances of all times and of all peoples, a difficulty arises in making the differentiation between dancing and games, pageants or processions ; they are so closely allied and so interwoven with one another that it is often impossible to draw a strict line of demarcation. For my own satisfaction I have resolved to call dancing all such bodily movements as are subject to definite rhythmic rules, and as are performed to an accompaniment of voice, instruments, or even to a mere clapping of hands or stamping of feet. This offers a wide field for inquiry, and will teach us that the dance is not only a pastime, but that in many places and among many races it is a ceremony 'full of state and ancientry;' that it often has been, nay, that it yet is to-day, frequently a solemn ritual ; that the origin of most dances can be found in religious worship, and that, therefore, both in olden times and among modern peoples who still are of simple faith, it was and is invested with a dignity which it never has had and probably never will have among nations who live in an artificial condition of society.

The dance belongs to all countries and to all ages ; it has come down to us through all myths, through all histories, through all religions, in spite of repressive edicts and anathemas ; and, though modified by epoch and fashion, like a well-tuned instrument, it echoes always in harmony with its times, it adapts itself to the land of its birth, and it has nevertheless always and everywhere preserved much of its original character.

We may not all agree with Molière, when he makes the dancing master in 'Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme' declare that the destiny of nations depends on the art of dancing, yet many will admit that there is some truth in Washington Irving's remark that the character of a people is often to be learnt from



The Dancing Lesson
(*From an Engraving after P. Canot*, 1745)

their amusements, 'for in the hour of mirth the mind is unrestrained and takes its natural bent.' And so it may not be too much to say that progress in the dance means progress in civilisation, and that to show the advance made by any nation in this art is to record its approach towards refinement. The Hebrews, the Greeks, the Aztecs, and the French are the

nations who have had the most beautiful dances, and all are, or were, peoples of undeniably high culture.

In its most usually apprehended sense the dance is the outcome of some form of joy or ecstasy, whether it be displayed by the evolutions of Bacchantes, of ancient Roman priests, of mediæval Christians, of dancing dervishes, or simply by the natural graceful steps of little children who will move in unconscious rhythm to express their hearts' delight. But there are occasions when the dance is the offspring of pain, sorrow, or fear. Funeral dances and death-bed dances are a world-wide custom. We hear of them in Patagonia, in Abyssinia, and in North America, in the East Indian isles and in the Highlands of Scotland; we read about them in ancient Egypt, and we can see them to-day in Spain, in Ireland, and in the centre of France. We may, therefore, assume that the dance in its most comprehensive spirit is the expression of emotion, and its character is mainly dependent on the power of the heart to feel, especially to feel melody, for the dance and music are 'a married pair.' Just as in the human voice there are sounds of love and sounds of anger, sounds of pleasure and sounds of pain, so there are all these characteristics in the various movements of the body and its limbs. It is probable that primitive man vaulted and skipped rather than danced, just as when he emitted vehement or plaintive sounds he produced screams instead of songs; but all dances, even the very earliest, have had a rhythmic accompaniment, from the mere knocking of two shells against one another to the hackneyed tune on the dancing master's kit, from the first measure beaten out to the sound of some quaint drum to the latest waltz performed by a full band of wind and stringed instruments.

Formerly the same people danced and sang simultaneously, and now and again we still find this the case, but as a rule it is considered preferable that some should make music while the others dance. This division of labour probably occasioned the frequent custom of the vocal accompaniment to popular dances

falling to the share of old crones who, having lost their symmetry of figure and nimbleness of feet, prefer to watch the dance, and to drawl out the melody and the words with their cracked voices and shrill accents. It is just possible that this not over-pleasing method may have caused instrumental music to usurp the place of the old dance-songs, and from one point of view this is to be deplored, for the connection of song and dance was so intimate that it resulted in a perfect concord of the movements with the accompaniment. The figures and steps of the dance varied according to the words of the song, creating thus a unity of expression which largely enhanced the artistic value of the performance. The oldest folk-songs were dance-songs; but the separation of music from the dance has been sadly prejudicial to the latter, which to-day can hardly be called an art. In the modern ball-room it may be looked upon as an exercise and as an opportunity for flirtation; on the modern stage it is mostly a form of acrobatism, a display of agility and dexterity, an exhibition of difficulties overcome—such as balancing the whole body on the point of the foot; besides that, it gives occasion to show off gorgeous apparel with lime-light effects, when it does not degenerate into mere scantiness of apparel and in mere exhibition of limbs—as a rule ugly from over-exercise. As for the modern national dance, it is almost a thing of the past; it is fast dying out, like national costume. The rustics' dance is only too often a romp or a rude brawl. There now exists a good deal of technical and athletic dancing exertion, but we rarely see what was called the 'poetry of motion,' or what Lamartine speaks of as the 'harmony of the body.'

It would be grossly unfair not to acknowledge that within the last quarter of this century the good teachers of dancing and the stage managers have made great efforts to arrive at a Renaissance of the art. The 'skirt dance' was originally a praiseworthy step in that direction; the flow of drapery superseding the penwiper-like costume of the ballet-girl, the slow and graceful movements instead of the painful tip-toe tripping,

were evidently calculated to revive classic traditions, and were probably copied from antique models. Yet I fear that the 'skirt dance' will be but a short-lived fashion, and that soon it will vanish from the scene. It has unfortunately gone down to the wretched and utterly contemptible level of the 'Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay,' and those who attribute a Greek origin to the 'skirt dance' must remember how, according to Herodotus, Hippoclides, the son of Tisander, lost a kingdom and a wife by performing a Greek Tararaboom! Wanton dancing has been reproved at all times and in all civilised states; but when once a special form of dancing has sunk down to low depths, it has great difficulties in regaining its position as an art form. We can trace this clearly in Spain, for instance, where some dances have been corrupted by African manners.

If we wish to see true dancing, dancing from pure lightness of heart, we must go to oppressed or to exiled nations. Strange as this may sound, it can be explained from the fact that such people cling strongly to their old rites; that by intermarrying they keep more faithfully to their traditions and preserve in greater purity the customs of their forefathers. In addition, they find in the physical exertion of the dance an expression and a relief of their varied pent-up feelings; thus to-day spontaneous dancing—dancing with a momentary happiness that defies description—may be witnessed in Poland, in Ireland, and among the Basques and Jews.

It is obvious from the above that the study of the 'History of the Dance' will lead us to the study of many strange customs and manners, and those who think that some fact is to be found at the root of every myth will be interested in the various claims to the origin of the dance which appear in different mythologies and chronicles.

Personally I believe that, however modified the popular dances of ages most remote and of countries most widely apart may be, they are all deduced from one common origin. For the last five years I have given my time almost entirely to the study of the history of the dance, and the deeper I get into



THE SKIRT DANCE

it the more I become convinced that the religious dance has been the foundation of all the others. There are instances where the absolutely secular form of the dance seems to preclude the notion of it ever having formed part of a ritual; but I believe this only arises from the limitation of our knowledge, and from inability to trace the dance far back enough; wherever this is possible I arrive at the conclusion that it was once a form of worship, or at least a form of magic. Again, I think that, wherever human beings are congregated together, there dances will be found, and that, from the most barbarous to the most cultured, the dance will reflect faithfully the individualistic and racial characters of the performers. The pagan has his dances for worship, for war or for medicine, and the Puritan, who abhors dancing, and who calls it an invention of the Arch-Enemy, will yet, in one of his sects (the Shakers of New Lebanon), attempt in the dance to obtain the Holy Spirit.

Travellers will tell us that such or such a tribe has no dances; but though I do not question the sincerity of their account, I still cling to my belief that all human beings have dances. If the explorer fails to see them, it is perhaps because he was among the people he describes at a season when there was no dancing, or (as we shall see in the chapter on savage dances) because the dance was a mystery, revealed only to the initiated and carefully hidden from the outsider. Dancing is no doubt coeval with the world, and men like Darwin and W. H. Hudson and others assert that not only man expresses his pleasure by dancing, but that several animals, notably birds, indulge in the pastime.

Two methods lie open to those who desire to give a detailed history of the dance. One is to divide it into the three kinds which are found all over the world—namely, the imaginative or poetic dancing (the poetry of motion); the descriptive or orgiastic dance, alluded to by Moses in the bull dance of the Israelites and sung by Juvenal, Martial, and other Pagan writers under the safe veil of the Latin language; and last, but not

least, the ritual or worship dance, already mentioned as the source of all the others.

The second method, and the one I have for various reasons chosen in this volume, is to treat the history of the dance from a geographical point of view, showing the dances in vogue in different countries and under different climes. To trace a dance from one land to another will often indicate the historical connection of different peoples; we shall also find the same dance, or the same kind of dance, practised by kindred nations, proving that race is a close bond of union between countries geographically distant. In this way national dances can be more clearly distinguished from those that are borrowed from other lands, and the origin of a dance can be better understood by taking the reader straight to the home of its birth. Further, we shall perceive that the dance is often the true indication of a people's character, and we shall see what nations have had the most beautiful dances, and which have contributed most to our knowledge of the art.

In ancient Greece dancing was brought to such great perfection that even the sculptors studied and designed the attitudes of the public dancers. In the first centuries of our era the Church allowed dancing within the sacred walls; then came a period of degradation of the art, till it found its renaissance in Italy in the sixteenth century. Thence it was introduced at the French Court by Catherine de' Medici, and the dance in Italian fashion was universally applauded, exciting the admiration of all; consequently it invited the imitation of strangers, among others of the Spaniards, who added the use of castanets—a custom imported by the Arabs. We shall trace the evolution of our modern waltz from the *lavolta* of Provence to the hurried performance of to-day. Bohemia will claim the right of having given birth to the polka—the polka which early in this century delighted society in France and England so keenly that even politics were forgotten for a time. During our choregraphic race we shall visit the Gipsies and the Basques, those strange, fascinating races which speak to us



Venetian Wedding Dance

(*From a Woodcut by Jost Amman, about* 1570)

of the East. There is a sameness about Oriental dancing, with its scarcity of steps and uniform hip movements, which can be identified all over Asia. The performers, either boys or girls, dance because it is their profession to do so, and for the reward of a salary, not for pleasure ; that is reserved, in strict opposition to our dancing, for the spectator, who is usually of a higher caste. Still, I believe that there is ritual dancing to be found in the East. I have come across spare accounts of it in China and in India, but there must be a great deal more than I have been able to ascertain.

Of all dances, the most numerous are those of savage races, in whose lives the dance is an important factor. From the orbicular dance of Paganism, from the religious chorodies of antiquity, came the tragic choruses, our ballets, and even the sacred evolutions of early and of mediæval Christians. The carols of England, still kept up at Christmas time, were originally sacred dances ; the *Reihen* of Germany, the *rondes* of France and Belgium, and some dances of Russia, belong to the same category.

In the primitive pantomime which accompanies the dances, especially those of savage races, we find the germs of the drama. The opera, partly from its more romantic nature, partly from its music, which cannot be dissociated from the dance, lends itself to the introduction of the ballet. The oldest ballet known was held over thirty centuries ago ; it dramatised the conquest of Shang-or-Yin by King Wû, and has been described by Confucius.

The dance has its literature ; it plays an important part in folk-lore, and from the sayings and proverbs of many countries can be culled sentences and references which prove that the dance is a universal art, that its adepts are the men and women of all the world, and that it is not lightly to be set aside as the pastime of an idle hour.

Though dancing frequently appears in literature, few works are exclusively devoted to it. In reading the majority of treatises on dancing one comes to the conclusion that 'those



A NAUTCH AT BOMBAY

who write do not know, and that those who know do not write.' Lucian's Dialogue (second century A.D.) on dancing may be regarded as the first monument of the history of ancient dancing; it is an apology or praise of the art full of didactic value.

Mere manuals of dancing are of very little interest to us, for the dance terms vary greatly at different times and places. How, for instance, can we understand the dancing-master of a southern Scottish town who, about one hundred years ago, wrote instructions for sixteen steps in the hornpipe and fourteen in the jig. In the hornpipe: 'Slips and shuffle forwards, spleet and floorish backwards, Hyland step forwards, heel and toe forwards, slips across forwards, twist round backwards, cross stocks aside and sink forwards, and finally hopp forwards and backwards' &c. &c.

Strange to say, the best works on dancing have been written by very grave personages. 'The Orchésographie,' a truly scientific book, is the most trustworthy record of the art of dancing in mediæval Europe; it is enriched with illustrations, musical examples, and with choregraphic figures which, together with the text, enable us to reproduce almost all the dances mentioned. It is full of quaint details as to the dancing manners of the period, and it was published in 1588 by a French monk, who had to hide his identity under an anagram; for even then animosity towards the art was rife. Another treatise of merit on dancing is the 'Orchestra,' a poem by Sir John Davies, Chief Justice of Ireland, written in 1596. Most subsequent works, whether in France, England, Germany, or Italy, are largely made up of quotations from the above-named works. It is well, however, to make an exception for Böhme's book on the dancing of Germany, which is most valuable, especially for its musical examples.

In general, the persecution directed against dancing, the fact that in mediæval times the only people who knew how to write at all were monks, priests, and other learned men averse to choregraphic art, the small importance attached to it, have been

very prejudicial to the history of the dance. Many more works have been written against the dance than about it.

A fraction of my knowledge of the dance has been derived from personal observation during my travels in various parts of the globe. Most of it is due to research work. I have studied books, pictures, and statues in many libraries and museums of Europe; besides the few treatises specially devoted to dancing, I have resorted for information to works on the history of music, encyclopædias, works on manners and customs, on popular lyrics and on popular beliefs, histories of the drama, of art, of costume, of the domestic life of various peoples, glossaries of provinces, journals of folk-lore and anthropology, accounts of travellers and missionaries, &c., and I have arrived at the conclusion that much is yet to be gathered and to be learnt, and that an exhaustive history of the dance would be the work of a lifetime. I have received great help and encouragement from many scholars, curators, and librarians of this country, and of France and Belgium, to guide me in my investigations. I should like to acknowledge my indebtedness to each one individually, but, as this is impossible, I beg to offer them here my hearty thanks for their assistance and courtesy, without which the compilation of this volume would have been almost impossible.

Those branches of the dance which require familiarity with the technicalities of the art, and those which are of an entirely special character, or dependent on contemporary acquaintance with dancing manners, have been treated by contributors to this work, and their articles will speak for themselves.

Enough, perhaps, has been said to indicate how superficial is the view which calls the dance only a frivolous amusement, and how inadequately we yet understand its historical import, its possibilities as an art, and its power towards creating instincts of culture and refinement. It is pleasant to watch the dance as it expresses its varied moods under each varied sky. Beautiful in Greece, where it still speaks of classical times, it winds and unwinds its chain at the popular festivals; voluptuous in



RUSTIC DANCE IN HOLLAND

Engraved by [illegible] after David Teniers

Spain and Italy, it clicks its castanets under vine trellis or lime grove ; dreamy in Germany, it glides to the tune of a waltz in some Gothic town-hall ; correct, graceful, and ceremonious, it steps elegantly through drawing-rooms in witty France ; gay, wholesome, and hearty in Great Britain—we find it everywhere ; and everywhere it seeks to tell the same story in a thousand different ways. Young feet move to its measure with equal pleasure on woodland moss, on the polished boards of palaces or on the chaff-strewn floors of barns ; youths



La Jok. Wallachian Dance
(*After D. A. M. Raffet*, 1837)

and maidens delight in it on 'Love's pathway retrodden by many generations,' on the village green as at the State ball. Through the course of ages dancing has been alternately grave or frivolous, religious or secular ; it has stepped 'high or disposedly.' All doors have opened to it—the gates of the temples, the castles of kings, the halls of learned lawyers, the cabin of the peasant. Sometimes we find it permeated and consecrated with the aroma of incense, sometimes we see it stained and profaned with wine ; again, it brings with it the scent of trodden

thyme or of Highland heather, but everywhere it moves to harmony, and, in spite of oppression, restriction, and abuse, it greets us even in commonplace to-day with a smile.



Provincial Dance in Italy
(*From an Etching by B. Pinelli*, 1814)

CHAPTER II

THE DANCES OF ANTIQUITY

DANCES OF EGYPT

THERE must have been a period of the world's history when every action in life, every game, every banquet, every dance, was a game, a repast, a dance, in honour of the gods. With the Egyptians dancing was a necessary part of every religious celebration, and later, of every mundane event. It is, therefore, not surprising to find such very numerous representations of the art in ancient Egyptian monuments.

After 1200 B.C. we have no details concerning Egyptian life; before that we have plenty of dancing figures. The Greeks, who gave many descriptions of Egyptian dancing, wrote only of the later period in the land of the Pharaohs, and of a time when the manners and customs of other nations had already penetrated into its social life. These authors, besides, have not troubled themselves to be over-accurate, and, therefore, must be taken with a grain of salt.

In the 'History' of Diodorus of Sicily he says: 'Osiris loved gaiety and much enjoyed songs and dances. He had with him always a company of musicians, among whom were nine maidens cultured in all the arts relating to music. Hence the Greeks call them the Nine Muses.'

The dances which strike us as the most curious of all those of Egypt were held in honour of the dead. On the Feast of Eternity (which was a feast of this character) the procession in which the image of the deceased was carried was

generally led by dancers. Their movements in olden times were slow, measured, and gliding ; the arms raised above the head, the palms turned outward. Certain women, with grease-besmeared heads covered with ashes, leaving only their eyes and mouth conspicuous, performed a contorted and convulsive dance. It consisted of strained twistings and slow well-balanced steps, the dancers keeping their eyes half closed. Each mourner had to go through this dance at least once, and the nearer she was related to the deceased the oftener must she repeat it. Greek authors relate that in some of these funeral processions a friend personified the dead man, and imitated by expression and gestures his characteristic faults and qualities.

Rhythmic movements accompanied by song no doubt assisted labour. Sometimes the taskmasters beat time with their hands, sometimes by means of clappers. Dr. Lepsius heard about a hundred Egyptian workmen who were excavating one of the pyramids sing while working, seeming to derive assistance in their toil from their singing. The melody is given in Engel's 'National Music,' and here reproduced.

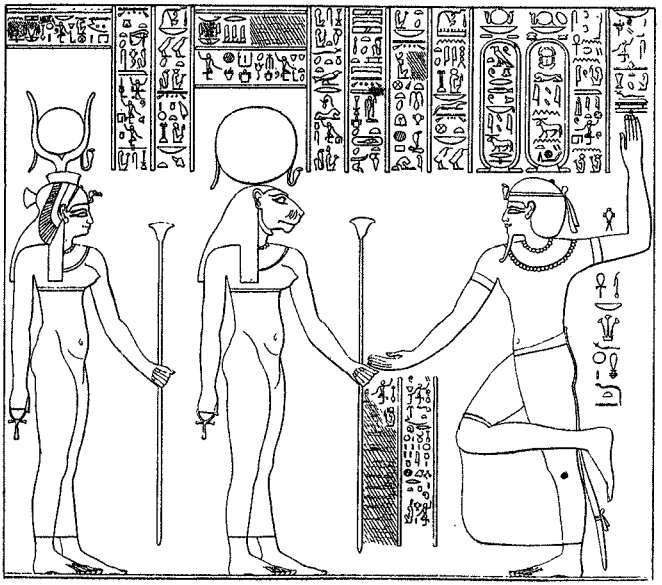


Erman notes that 'even servant-women exhibited their gymnastics and steps before the master. No feast was complete without such dances. They seemed to the Egyptian the natural expression of joy : to rejoice and to dance were synonymous terms in his poetic language. Jubilant gratitude towards the deity after a good harvest was expressed by a dance, the dance being as essential a part of the cult as the wearing of wreaths. It would seem that ball-playing accompanied many dances, and there are many illustrations of this art in existence.'

In Egypt the dancing-women were called Awálim—wise or learned ; and this proves that originally the art had a higher purpose than the mere amusement of the spectators. The girls

who danced at a later period, like those of the East, were not looked upon as paragons of virtue. They performed in long, transparent gowns, beating drums or castanets in quick time.

The accompanying songs were often given by blind singers, numerous in Egypt, or by songstresses trained in the art. Memphis was celebrated for the production of accomplished singers.



Trajan dancing before the Egyptian Deities

An amusing representation is that of the Emperor Trajan's dance before the Egyptian gods. Trajan was never in Egypt, and if he had been he would never have given homage to these idols. This is an instance of the artist representing, not what has been done, but what he thinks Trajan ought to have done in the circumstances ; and it is all the more amusing because Trajan forbade the pantomimic dances in Rome.

In the course of his many years' digging in Egypt, Professor Flinders Petrie made the following observations:

'While naming the local festivals, it may be noted that they generally take place around a tall pole fixed in some open space in the village. Some poles are stout masts, thirty or forty feet high; around this central point is the celebration of *molid*, or the birthdays of the village saint. . . .

'Many visitors to Egypt see the dancing and howling dervishes, but few know of the common and less offensive orgies



The Dervishes Dancing in Egypt
(*From an Engraving after C. N. Cochin, 1787*)

of the same kind in villages. They are connected strictly with a devotional sentiment: a man who has just joined such excitement will tell you that it is "good to see Allah" in that way, much like the fervid and maddening religious intoxication which yet finds a place in English civilisation. These dervish parties are formed from a few men and boys, perhaps twelve or twenty, who happen to live as neighbours. They are almost always held in moonlight, generally near full moon, a point which may connect them with some pre-Islamite moon

worship ; and though often without any cause but idleness, I have noticed them being held after a death in a village where they do not occur otherwise. A professional dervish often leads the party, but that is not essential. The people all stand in a circle and begin repeating "Al-lah," with a very strong accent on the latter syllable, bowing down the head and body at the former, and raising it at the latter. This is done all in unison and slowly at first ; gradually the rate quickens, the accent is stronger and becomes more of an explosive howl, sounding afar off like an engine ; the excitement is wilder and hideously wild, until a horrid creeping comes over you as you listen, and you feel that in such a state there is no answering for what may be done. Incipient madness from the intoxication of excitement seems poured out upon them all when, at last, they break down from sheer exhaustion, or perhaps one or other, completely mad for the time, rushes off into the desert and is followed for fear he may injure himself. After a pause some other phrase is started, and the same round is gone through. They separate with a great sense of devotional virtue, and wearied with excitement.'

There is no doubt that traces of the ancient dance (but not of the very earliest) are still found in Egypt. Erman says that 'however uniform these dances may appear on the reliefs, one can distinguish by close observation the varied figures. . . At sacrificial funeral feasts, the songstresses stand opposite the dancing-women, and between the groups is a table spread with viands.'

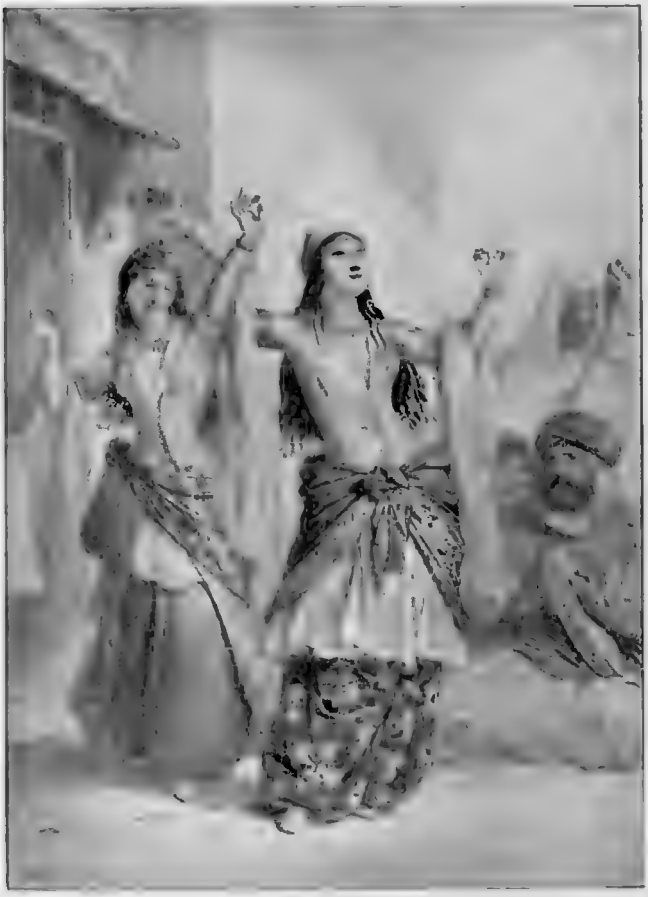
Women only danced on occasions in their long robes ; they usually wore the men's clothing of a short apron round the loins, and they are to be distinguished from men by their ornaments—necklaces, bracelets, anklets, and wreaths of flowers. These dancers belonged to the harem of the great people of Egypt. 'Besides these simple dances performed by numbers,' adds Erman, 'there are others—duet-dances, of intricate figure. Three of these are represented on a tomb of the latter end of the Fourth Dynasty. The movements of more ancient times

were quiet and measured ; those of later periods were similar to the contemporary dances of the East. The girls wearing long, diaphanous robes turn to quick time. Those merely girt round the waist go through their evolutions while beating time with their hands, to the accompaniment of a flute and three singing women, who sing a hymn of praise for the happy season of the Nile inundation.'

At great banquets the guests were entertained with dances, as may be seen represented in a wall-painting at the British Museum. 'Ball-playing,' says Erman, 'was only a variety of the dance.' It is indicated by the costume, or perhaps sometimes by the absence of costume, of the girls ; of this there is an example in the picture from Benihassan. The dance is that performed at the funeral feast of Chnemhotep. The figures are easily interpreted ; some are a parody, another is the wind, others are grasses bent by the wind. Many of the postures resembled those of the modern ballet ; thus, as Wilkinson points out, the 'pirouette delighted an Egyptian party upwards of 3,550 years ago.'

The Egyptians forbade those of the higher classes to learn to dance as an accomplishment. By permitting professional persons to be introduced into their assemblies to entertain their guests, they sanctioned all the diversion of which it was supposed to be capable, without compromising their dignity. Slaves were taught dancing, for it was part of their duty to entertain their masters. Free Egyptians of a low class made it their profession, but when the natives danced amongst themselves, they generally inclined to pantomime. But, besides the pirouette and other steps, a favourite figure dance, described by Wilkinson, was adopted throughout the country. In this 'the two partners, usually men, advanced towards each other, or stood face to face upon one leg, and having performed a series of movements, retired again in opposite directions, continuing to hold by one hand, and concluded by turning each other round.' This attitude of the two figures has been adopted in hieroglyphics as the sign of dancing. 'In another step, they struck

the ground with the heel, standing on one foot, changing, perhaps, alternately from right to left. To manage the hands



Ghâzeeyehs of Rosetta
(*From a Print after E. Prisse*, 1848)

skilfully and with grace,' continues Wilkinson, 'was of paramount importance, not only with Egyptians but with other

ancient peoples; and Plutarch mentions a person who was commended for his superiority in this species of gesture!' A wall-painting from Thebes, in the British Museum, shows women singing and clapping their hands to the sound of double pipes; other women are dancing.

The more modern dancers of the harem, once so highly esteemed as learned women, dance to the music of violins and tambourines.



Dance of Fellahs of Upper Egypt
(*From a Print after Rifaud*)

The Ghâwâzees or Ghâzeeyehs of to-day are generally hired to perform dances on certain occasions, such as a wedding. They go through their evolutions with unveiled face, and the men sitting down in the court and watching them, while the women enjoy the performance from the windows of the harem.

A modern Egyptian dance, called the 'Bee,' is performed by a single dancer, who, in look or action, expresses the pain she feels on being stung.

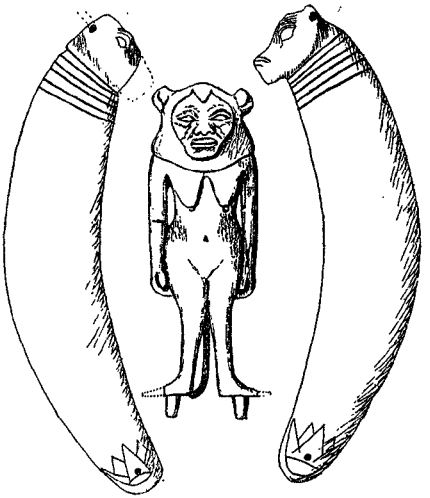
We still regard the Egyptians as the first inventors of the art of choregraphy—that is, the art of describing by characters



DANCING GIRLS AT AN ANCIENT EGYPTIAN BANQUET (THEBES)

From a coloured Egyptian Wall-painting in the British Museum

on paper all sorts of dances, as musicians have made a written language of music by notation.



Mask and Ivory Clappers found by Professor W. M. Flinders Petrie
(*Reproduced by permission*)



Assyrian Mummers

Among the fellahs or peasants of Upper Egypt, after a wedding the bride and her friends join in a dance which is

accompanied by tambourines and hand-clapping. The women wear long veils, and if this dance continues after sunset the performers are escorted home by a crowd bearing lighted lamps or candles.

Professor Flinders Petrie found a remarkable carving, which may be a toy or a symbolic figure executed in hard wood, and it was found buried in the floor of a chamber together with a pair of ivory clappers. This clearly represents a mummer or dancer in costume with a headdress, or mask, and tail. The mask was probably intended for the head of Bes, as that god is often figured as dancing, playing tambourines and pipes.

This subject of mummers, especially of those dancing in the skin of animals, is a very interesting one to archæologists and folk-lorists, but it will suffice here to show a representation of some Assyrian mummers.

BIBLICAL DANCES AND LATER DANCES OF THE JEWS

The use of rhythm, of measured motion or language, is characteristic of human nature. The most uncivilised races have expressed their feelings by such measured movements in the dance. Religious instinct finds relief in declaring itself through the dance incorporated in ceremonial observance; and only when the nation becomes artificial does dancing fall to the level of an amusement.

Possibly no people have as yet had a dance so dignified and so grand in idea and performance as that of the Hebrews. With them it was chiefly an act of gratitude for a victory, or an accompaniment to a hymn of praise.

Their movements were not governed by a hard and fast rule. Nor were quick rotation and graceful gesture accounted of paramount importance. Their motive was a solemn one—to express gratitude and praise to God for deliverance from the enemy. At public religious festivals the singer of sacred hymns, animated by a noble emotion, made the dance, like the music

and the speech, translate the depth of his feeling. That shouting and triumphal singing were part of the worship is evident from many texts of the Bible. The dance is spoken of as a symbol of joy, and contrasted with mourning. In early times it was accompanied by a song or the timbrel. The word 'Mahol,' an equivalent for dance, includes also the musical instrument which accompanies it. Most of the terms used lead us to suppose that the Hebrew dances were of a circular order. Saalschütz thinks, however, that the dance of Mahanaim was a double choir—that is, two rows of girls dancing—a sort of contredanse (Cant. vi. 13.)

It has been established by the most learned Biblical commentators that in the mention of timbrels, cymbals, and other musical instruments, the dance is generally included. Laban asks why Jacob did not give him an opportunity of sending him away 'with mirth and with songs, with tabret and with harp'? (Genesis xxxi. 27), and the canticle of the Israelites after the destruction of the Egyptians was accompanied by the timbrel of Miriam, 'and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances' (Exod. xv. 20). Thus the leader of the dance was she who first started it, generally a person of high rank, like Miriam, the sister of Aaron, Jephthah's daughter; and Judith went out with all the women of the land, who wore wreaths of olives, while she who delivered them from Holofernes takes the lead in the dance. The inferiors were invited to join by speech or action. Miriam's was a type of a dance still practised in modern Arabia. It has no rules, but varies according to the imagination of the leader, who improvises as her feeling suggests. It belongs to the open air and wide plain.

MIRIAM'S SONG

(*By permission of Messrs. Sampson Low & Co.*)





This song is given by Chorley. At the present day it is sung as a hymn in the synagogues. According to the Père Ménestrier, the Israelites, after the passage of the Red Sea, performed a thanksgiving dance to the hymn of Moses. Millileus, in his 'Moses Viator,' thus describes it :—

'Let Jacob's sons their cheerful voices raise
In grateful hymns to their Preserver's praise.
Let the glad dance attend th' harmonious sound,
And shouts of joy from earth to heaven rebound.'
This when the chief had said, on either side
The troops, obedient to command, divide.
He, with his rod, directs th' attending choirs,
And first begins the song which Heav'n inspires.
Soon as the men the holy dance had done,
The Hebrew matrons the same rites begun ;
Miriam presiding o'er the female throng,
Begins and suits the movement to the song.

It is understood that in these ancient rites men and women danced in separate groups. The only promiscuous dance was of the kind performed by the sinful children of Israel round the golden calf (Exod. xxxii. 19), which was not Hebrew in origin, but idolatrous, possibly orgiastic.

Occasions for dancing were given by domestic festivals, and social pleasures, women moving to the sound of the adufe—the name given also to the Biscayan tabor. In this wise the daughters of Shiloh danced on an annual feast when the children of Benjamin surprised them and carried away each man a wife to himself 'of them that danced' (Judges xxi. 19–23). The feast which the women celebrated was probably the Feast of



THE DANCE ROUND THE GOLDEN CALF

Tabernacles ; it is called there a feast to the Lord. They did not dance so much for their recreation as to express their holy joy ; the dance was modest, and not participated in by men



David dancing before the Ark
(*From an Engraving after Domenichino*)

Only the virgins danced. In the same book there is the example of Jephthah's daughter, who was so jovously dancing when she met her fate. She came to meet Jephthah with timbrel and with dances (Judges xi. 34).

The fact that most dances in Biblical history were executed by women explains in some measure Michal's sneer at David's leading the procession of the ark with an emphatic dance. It is not supposed that the king went through set figures with precise steps, but that he ran, skipped, and rejoiced, in the manner of a child dancing with joy. Michal perhaps chose to see in her husband's vigorous leaps some impulse different from the religious one which would free his body from earth and bear it towards heaven. He had laid aside his imperial purple, and put on a plain linen ephod, which was light and suitable for the dance. Such a garment was used during religious exercises by those who were not priests. Michal, who was not religiously minded, could not share David's transport, and thought that her husband's behaviour lacked dignity. To all her cruel upbraiding, which was not reserved for his private ear, but poured out before the multitude, he replied gently that by his dance he had purposed to honour God. 'It was before the Lord' (2 Sam. vi. 14, 21). Strangely enough, there are no further records of dancing at sacred festivals during David's reign, although he was himself a poet and a musician, and probably encouraged art.

The daughter of Saul would perhaps nourish in her heart an echo of her father's jealousy, as he observed the choruses of the women when they played and danced (1 Sam. xviii. 6, 7), going to meet the victorious warriors, and seeming to praise David at his expense. The chorus was then a leading feature of the triumphal procession, as it was of the harvest or village festival.

The Amalekites, when they were slaughtered at the hands of David's army, were dancing 'because of all the great spoil that they had taken' (1 Sam. xxx. 16). But amongst the Hebrews themselves the dancing was not confined to the women, for it is said, 'Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together' (Jer. xxxi. 13).

It is believed that the dedication of the walls of Jerusalem under Ezra and Nehemiah was solemnized by two moving

choruses of praise, with musical accompaniment. It is noteworthy that on this occasion the dance was performed by men, no women took part in it; that the performers were chosen from the elders of the people, and that only those of unstained honour were allowed to participate in it. The dancers threw their lighted torches in the air, catching them again with a great ability, which almost amounted to jugglery. At the annual festivals—partly religious, partly civic—instituted by Judas Maccabæus, which flourished as long as Jerusalem stood, the dance expressed public rejoicing. The following details are derived from the Talmudic writers. On the day preceding the Feast of Tabernacles, everyone went to the house of the Shoeba, carrying branches of myrtle, willow, and palm-leaves, to which lemons were attached, for the procession round the altar. In the house were four candelabra, thirty yards high, on which were the vases destined for the sacrifice. An illumination took place at night: four priests held vessels of oil, and, climbing ladders, filled the vases. The wicks, made from the old belts of the priests, were lighted forthwith. Every house in the city was lighted from the fires of the house of the Shoeba. The whole multitude then joined in the panegyric that followed. The priests sang the praises of the Most High, and all repaired to the house of the Lord. Here men, famous for their piety and good works, danced with lighted torches, singing hymns and canticles, as also did the Levites; and the sound of the kinnor and the cymbals was heard with trumpets and other musical instruments. At dawn two priests, facing the principal door, announced with three blasts of the trumpet in different directions the signal for the pouring out of the water of Siloam.

Voss says: 'We can hardly realise the imposing effect of such dances performed during the silent night in grand buildings lighted by the powerful flames from golden candelabra—a congregation wrapped in religious fervour, dancing to the accompaniment of harps and cymbals, while through the temple resounded the psalm, "The Lord shall keep thee

from all evil."' This dance feast was called Beth-ha-shoeba, and it is said of it that he who did not feel this joy, did not know what joy was.

One of the interpreters of the Scriptures says, 'You may hear in all the choral psalms of which they make mention a band of men dancing to the sound of divers instruments of music.'

'He promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask' (Matt. xiv. 7). So great was the charm exercised on Herod by the dance of the daughter of Herodias; and Herod preferred to commit a murder rather than to break his vow and disappoint his mistress. The barbarous scene of the head brought in on a charger, giving such an unfavourable idea of the Jewish manners of the time, has often been painted. The whole episode affords startling proof of the influence and importance of dancing in those times. The evangelists, with this tragedy before them, say little about dancing, and nothing in the way of recommendation of the dance as an act of worship. The Fathers were very severe on certain dances, and St. Chrysostom, in a homily, says that Christians do not now deliver up half a kingdom or another man's head at the bidding of a dancer, but give their own souls to inevitable destruction. The subject of Salome dancing before Herod has inspired a great many artists, and there are a number of pictures in existence, most of them portraying the dancing customs and the dress prevalent during the lifetime of the painter; but although many represent Dutch, or Italian, or German ball scenes, they nevertheless take us back nearly three thousand years into the Hebraic world. Israel von Menecken has a striking picture on this subject, so has Karel von Mander. The accompanying illustration is a copy of his work, in which he shows us a corner (during the ball) where John the Baptist's head is cut off. An older version of the Bible says Salome *vaulted*, and in mediæval pictures, both on stained glass windows and in manuscripts, she is represented walking on her hands, as in the illustration on page 31.

The diversity of opinion on the subject of the morality of



SALOME BEFORE HEROD

(From a Fresco in the Kaiserhaus Museum)

dancing has been very great. Some affirm that it is holy, and point to David before the ark ; others maintain that it must be a profane exercise, inferring this principally from the dance by corrupt Jews round the molten calf. Others again, looking at St. Luke, chap. vii., say that it is a matter of indifference, and indeed very little could be adduced for or against the exercise from the apostle's metaphor. At all times people have been too ready to use texts of the Bible to support their own opinions. Surely there are examples of holy and of unholy dancing in the



Salome dancing on her hands before Herod

(*From an Illuminated Manuscript of the Fourteenth Century*)

Scriptures, all depending on the motive of the dance, and the conduct of it.

The *joy* of dancing is distinctly illustrated by Biblical passages, where the expression 'playing with timbrels' probably always means dancing. In the sixty-eighth Psalm a triumphal ceremony in the temple is described : 'They have seen Thy goings, O God, even the goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary. The singers went before, the minstrels followed after, among them were the damsels playing with timbrels' (A.V. verse 25). Delitzsch says that 'the legislation of the priestly code made no change in the taste of the people for dancing ; this

grew rather than waned in the later period.' We see that it finds its way into the religious service. The Psalter closes with calls to festal dancing : ' Let them praise His name in the dance ' (Ps. cxlix. 3), and ' Praise Him with timbrel and dance ' (Ps. cl. 4).

Jeremiah comforts his people by : ' Again shalt thou be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry ' (xxxi. 4).

On the solemn feast of Atonement there was a dance held in the vineyards ; also on the last day of the wood offering. These were dances of a merry nature and intended solely to express pleasure. A pretty custom is reported by Delitzsch as connected with this dance : ' The maidens, without ornament, were dressed in white, borrowing newly washed dresses for the occasion ; even the rich borrowed them, so as not to put the poor to shame.' The singing was done by the men; ' but under the chastening influence of the day's solemnities, the meeting took the form, in a measure, of looking for or choosing a bride.' I hear from Dr. Schechter, Reader in the Talmudic at Cambridge, that formerly during the dance called Mizva the girls were allowed to propose to the men.

After the dispersal of the Jews those who were most oppressed showed most signs of religious exaltation in their observances. In Poland, for instance, their joy in the expectation of the Messiah who shall deliver them from servitude and give them back their national rights excites their minds so much that it breaks out in songs and dances in the very synagogue, and they think that this expression can only be pleasing to God. In such inhospitable lands their family ties are strengthened. Amongst the Jews of Metz marriage ceremonies were once very stately. Games, baths, and music preceded the procession, and rejoicing and dances lasted for eight days. The Jews of Morocco have similar rejoicings at weddings. The accompaniment consists of the Moorish guitar, the tambourine, and shrieking monotonous songs ; the dances are similar to those of the Ghâwâzee of modern Egypt. When the performers have concluded the exercise, which each

one varies according to her taste and skill, the spectators touch with a piece of money the one they have most admired. This piece is finally deposited in a vase kept for the purpose, and the whole sum belongs to the musicians on whom the dancers are dependent. In some districts the small coins are actually stuck on the face of the dancer, and a favourite may thus have her face covered. Rich men have often ruined themselves in these entertainments. M. Anquetal du Perron, giving an account of the dance at Surat, says that the dancer Laal Koner gained such ascendency over the Mogul emperor, Maezeddin, that he made her joint governor with himself over the empire.

Dr. Frankldl, in his 'Journey to the East,' attended a banquet in a Jewish house at Damascus, at which Baron Rothschild was also present. An illuminated open court, full of orange and red almond trees in blossom, was crossed by men of different complexions, wandering about in motley costumes; the lights looked like magic lamps of ruby, emerald, and topaz, such as we read of in the 'Arabian Nights.' Above all was the clear bright moon. The whole company sat down, smoking, and drinking coffee.

In order to show respect to the guests, the ladies began their dance. 'Two rose from the circle, approached us, and after applying the right hand to the forehead, heart, and lips (while we stood to return the salutation), they softly touched our right hands, which were extended to meet theirs. The dance was accompanied by the noisy music of the band, and the clacking of wooden castanets. Each lady moved as she chose, without referring to the other. She applied the right and the left hand in turn to the forehead much in the same way as an officer returns a salute, and she went round the circle as if dancing a cotillon. . . . The nearest approach to a graceful posture was when one of the group placed her hand on her waist and proudly bent her head backwards. There was no sort of expression or manifestation of character perceptible in their features. The performance gave you the idea of some highly ornamental figures moved by some mechanical

process. I caught myself looking up to see if I could not discover the puppet player who directed the movements of these picturesque figures with strings.'

The dance lasted about ten minutes, then the dancers saluted as at the beginning, and the men clapped hands in sign of applause. At once a second pair began, and when all had taken part in turn, Dr. Frankldl complained of having been reduced to a state of comatose ennui.

THE DANCE IN GREECE

In a comparative study of the art of dancing, it is difficult to say in what country or at what period it first originated. For in the same way that the myths of various peoples seem to correspond when there is no apparent connection between them, the same dance is often found at the same time in different parts of the globe.

Although the Greeks can lay no claim to be the originators of the art, their dances are more worthy of consideration than those of races to whom we are less directly indebted for our art and philosophy. And their dance must have been more artistic, more expressive, more gay and varied, than that of Egypt.

It has already been said that a nation's special character is depicted in its dance, and we find that the deeply religious nature of the ancient Greeks is thus portrayed. Some of the philosophers defined the soul as the harmony of the body, and in the all-pervading love of proportion, so conspicuous among the people, the aim was to develope equally all the powers of body and mind. To the Greeks belongs the triumphant demonstration that poetry, music, and dancing can form one art. The Grecian mother sang to her children songs relating the feats of warriors and heroes, the praises of the gods, and the history of past ages : as she sang she taught them the dance descriptive of each theme.

The Greek love of symmetry, order, and regularity went



Dance of Apollo and the Muses
(*From an Engraving after Giulio Romano*)

together with reverence for the dignity and perfection of the human form. Lucian, to whom we are indebted for a treatise on the dance, asserts that in no other art is so great an activity of mind and body required. The root-idea must, as it were, penetrate the whole body, and all the limbs have to translate the mental emotion by an expression of bodily movement.

The special characteristic of Greek dancing consists of the physical representation of an idea; it expresses also actions, inclinations, and events, and offers an outlet for pent-up impulse in a rhythm of artistic grace. Plato, in his 'Laws,' observes that it is a natural instinct of all creatures to move, and especially to move with certain rules of periodicity; for the principle exists within us in the beating of our arteries, and around us in the flight of birds, the canter of horses, the ebb and flow of the sea.

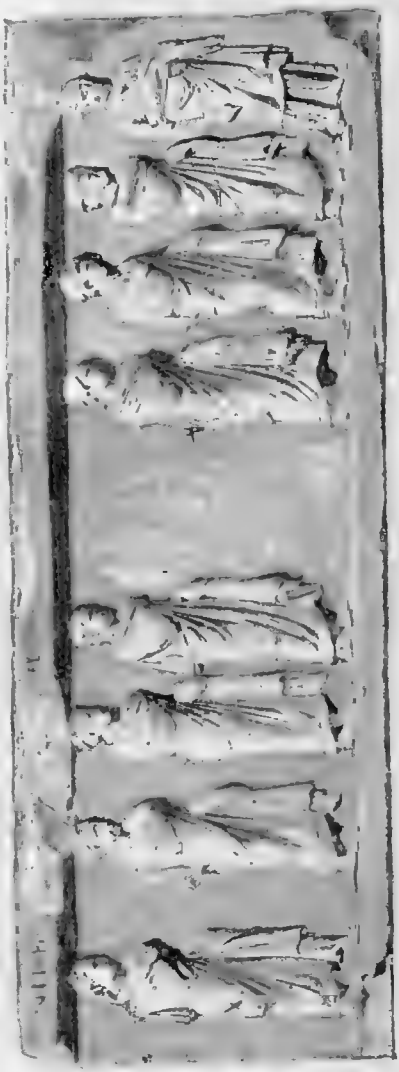
Most primitive dances were certainly circular. Several causes are given as an explanation. It is said that by the circular movement the apparent rotation of sun and planets is imitated. Again, it is said that the circle represents to the popular mind the idea of the infinite. 'Nature,' says Emerson, 'centres into balls.'

The Phaiakian dance praised by Homer was performed by youths in a circular movement round a singer. There exists a very primitive reproduction in terra-cotta of maidens of Cyprus dancing round a tree. The Maypole dance is here foreshadowed in what seems to be the cult of the tree which in arid countries is even to-day revered as an emblem of fertility.

The feeling for the rhythmical, the recurrence of regular, proportional, and measured beats, was highly cultivated and enjoyed by the Greeks. The popular ear was very sensitive to it, as was also the eye. According to Horace, the eyes are more faithful than the ears, and it is easier to trust one's sight than one's hearing. The order and proportion observed in movement is rhythm; in relation to sound it is called harmony, and in Greece the connection of rhythm with harmony

is expressed by the word orchêsis, for which we have no equivalent, as the word 'dance' does not convey the two-fold idea of dancing and music, 'the married pair,' as Lucian calls them. This union was first made by the voice, for what could be more natural than to add rhythmical movements to a song or poem? and every accentuation of verse was accompanied by a step in the orchestic representations. Step and gesture were interwoven with poetry, and to dance in rhythm to the verse was the same thing as to read it out in true measure.[1]

With the ancients, the dance, in its narrowest sense, included the whole art of gesture.



Cyclic or Dithyrambic Chorus moving round the Altar of Dionysos
(*From Schreiber-Anderson's 'Atlas of Classical Antiquities'*)

[1] Plutarch, in his *Symposiaca*, describes it clearly as the handmaid of poetry; its purpose was to emphasise the poet's creations.

Arms and hands were more important than feet, as we see in Ovid's 'Si mollia bracchia, salta.' Dancers in Greece were called Cheirosophi, skilled with the hands, and number and cadence throbbed in every one of their exercises. Not only were the Athenians eloquent in words, but also in gestures, mostly of the hands and arms; and, like the modern South Italians, they had their mimetic language, which insensibly led to pantomimic representations, and the drama. How dancing originated it is difficult to explain, as difficult as it would be to say how verse was born from common speech.

Cheironomia then, this art of speaking from afar by means of hand gestures, must be considered as part of the study of the classic dance and of the modern mime. This branch of art was essential to the orator of the Forum and to the dancer of the theatre. In Greece the poets were teachers of Cheironomia; in Rome, the actors. Primitive nations, like children, use gesture before words, and one great use of Cheironomia by ancient civilised nations possibly arose when they traded with barbaric peoples.

Athenæus writes that Telestes, a dancer in the theatre of Æschylus, was so skilled in Cheironomia that he represented in a dance the 'Seven before Thebes.' To represent abstract ideas by such means would be even more difficult, yet the story is told of Sostratus, that he refused to give a dance called 'Liberty' before the conqueror of his native town. 'It would not be fitting for me to dance the "liberty" which my native town has lost.' Plato and Xenophon have nothing but praise for the art, and Juvenal celebrates, in his fifth Satire, the skill of a Cheironomic dance in which a Gaul waits at table, carving the meats with such rapidity that the knife seemed to fly.[1]

The interest of enlightened Greeks, poets, artists, and people, centred in man—his nature and his actions. Unlike

[1] In the earliest times dancing in connection with the drama consisted mostly of movements with the feet; the use of the hands and arms in dancing and the introduction of elaborate gesticulation were developments due to a later period. (Athen. p. 630.)

the Orientals, they had a repugnance to ascetic self-denial; unlike the Romans, they were not afraid of losing personal dignity by the liveliness of their manners or expansive sociability. They were eminently practical, besides being highly sensuous. Entirely devoid of affectation, they talked and wrote freely of what they loved, without ever thinking it incumbent on them to comply with conventions. They had no tinge of romantic feeling, and were disposed to serenity and cheerfulness, which they thought contributed much to health. They loved an outdoor life, and worshipped the body with a loving care. Besides all this, they had very great utilitarian spirit and discrimination; those objects only were agreeable to them, and therefore, by association, beautiful, which ministered directly or indirectly to man's comfort or sensuous enjoyment. Their utilitarian instinct prompted them to make their recreation, as well as their labour, contribute to the public welfare; and, as the exercise of dancing added to the beauty of the human figure, as it encouraged force and grace, roused cheerfulness, and preserved in the mind a feeling of harmony and proportion, it formed in Greece a chief branch of the education of the young, all classes indulging in it. The masters and inventors of the dances were the poets themselves. They taught the figures and movements; and we know that Thespis, Pratinas, Cratinus, and Phrynichus[1] all danced in the representations of their own dramas. Æschylus also did much to elevate the art of gesture and improve scenic dancing.

Intensely religious as they were, the sentiment pervaded every feature of their lives; their pleasures were embodied in their religious ceremonies, and it was a happy peculiarity of their nature to carry enjoyment to a very great length, and yet stop short of the discordant and vulgar element of excess. No festival, no solemnity was complete without songs and dances; and the dance kept its original purity as long as a high standard of morality remained unshaken. Its

[1] Phrynichus boasts of having discovered more figures in dancing than there are waves in a stormy sea.

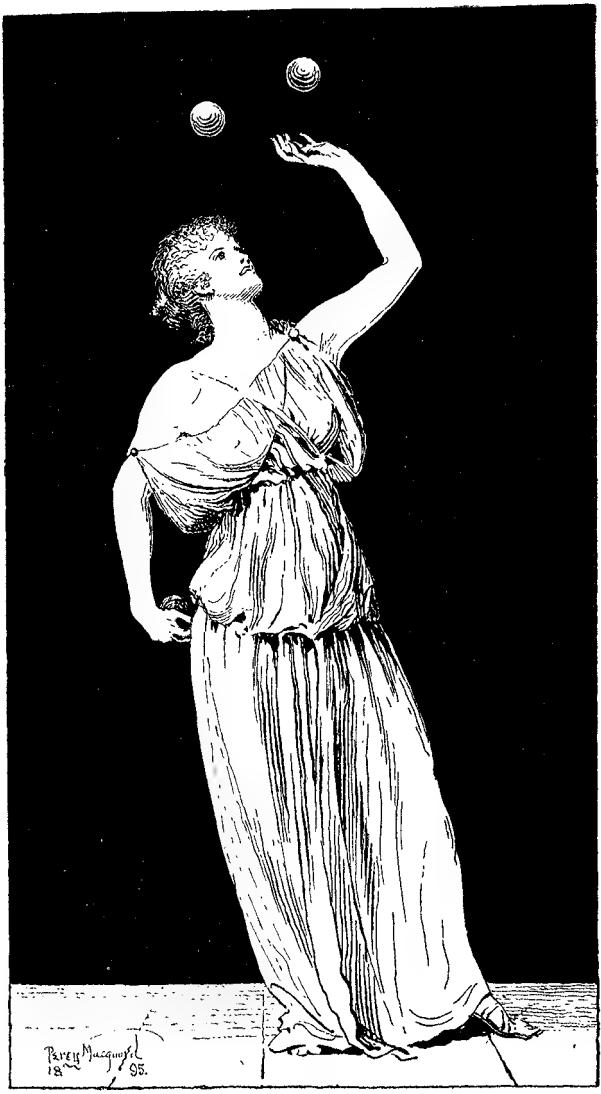
connection with religious worship invested the dance with a dignity it has never possessed in modern times. Homer calls sleep, love, music, and dancing the sweetest and the most perfect of all human enjoyments, but he dignifies the last alone by the epithet of 'blameless.' 'No perfect republic without the theatre and the dance,' reasoned Plato. 'In order to be a good soldier it is necessary to know how to dance,' was another saying. And Socrates, who at the age of sixty learns the art from Aspasia, asks, 'Am I to be blamed for reducing the corpulence of my body by a little dancing?'

Like the literature and the plastic art of a country, the dance becomes imbued with the spirit of the time. Thus we find that in Greece, as the people degenerated and gradually lost their taste for the beautiful, mechanical dexterity took the place of real art.

The dances of Greece are fully described by Homer, Hesiod, Plato, Xenophon, Plutarch, Athenæus, Lucian, Pollux, and other writers; and although by them we are taught the spirit of the art and its influence upon the people, the actual figures of various dances are better understood by a close inspection of statuary, fictile vases, and wall-paintings. Athenæus says that dancing was brought to such perfection in imitating the passions that the most eminent sculptors often took their models and designs from the attitudes of public dancers, and thus produced that great beauty and grace of form and figure which have never been surpassed in the history of the world. Strangely enough, yet according to the cyclic order of events, these well-preserved and marvellous figures and postures have come to be the models and studies of the dancers of a later day.

Primarily, the dance of Greece was a form of worship and a branch of education, but it did not long remain stationary, and from its religious origin it soon penetrated every-day life, forming part of all merry-making, and being introduced into the drama, where it attained greater perfection, and rose to art.

With increasing popularity the dance increased in em-



THE BALL-DANCE IN ANCIENT GREECE

bellishments and variety. Each solemnity had its own, and a formidable list of names of varieties confronts us. The scientist Meursius has gone fully into the question; but the scope of the present book does not admit of more than a general outline.

The Greek dances may be divided and subdivided *ad infinitum*. Although it is not necessary to treat dancing like a mathematical problem, one must, for the sake of convenience, specify three technical varieties: the Kubistic, including leaping and acrobatic feats; the Spheristic, rhythmical movements accompanying ball-throwing; and the Orchestic, or dancing proper, as we understand it, as far as the low ideals of the time allow. Remembering that all the dances were religious, we may note a group belonging especially to the feasts of the gods; they were the warlike or gymnastic, and the mimic or dramatic. Of these the funeral dances deserve some description.

The funeral was attended with grave marches and sad gestures to indicate sorrow, and sometimes to picture the episode which caused the end of the deceased. The mourners were dressed in white and crowned with cypress. Fifteen virgins dancing preceded the funeral car; a troop of youths surrounded it. The procession was closed by weeping women covered with long black cloaks.

A kind of warlike dance called Gymnopaidia was performed by two groups of youths and children, quite nude, singing hymns by Thaletas, a poet who is said to have introduced into Sparta a more vehement style both of music and dance, with the Kretic and Paeonic rhythm. Other hymns were sung, those of Alkman dating from 627 B.C.; and the pæans of Dionysodotos. These Gymnopaidia, mentioned by Pausanias as a favourite sport and dance, go back to the LIX Olympiad. They were as much processions as dances. The leaders were called Thyreatics, in memory of the victory of Thyrea, and they carried wreaths of palms. Sometimes the pageant was held in honour of those who fell at Thyrea or Thermopylæ. The Laconian, composed of three choruses representing the past, present, and future, was a military dance, calculated to give the

Lacedæmonians strength and agility in using their weapons. Verses accompanied the dance. The old men began :

> We once were young and gay as you,
> Valiant, bold, and active too.

The young men responded :

> 'Tis now our turn, and you shall see
> You've ne'er deserved it more than we.

The boys chimed in :

> The day shall come when we shall show
> Feats that surpass all you can do.

The Lacedæmonians had other dances which were accompanied by the singing of verses. A particularly slow and serious dance is mentioned by Athenæus—a lyric dance called Hyporchematic, in which a chorus of men and women danced round the altar where the sacrifice was burning. Like the pæan, it was in honour of Apollo. The first movement was from left to right, imitating the Zodiac ; the second and reversed movement imitated the march of the heavens.

A warlike dance, in fact the great dance of war, was the Pyrrhic. By the laws of Sparta, every child over five had to learn it, and it was practised daily in the public place. Hector is believed to allude to it when he speaks of 'moving the feet to the sound of Mars.'

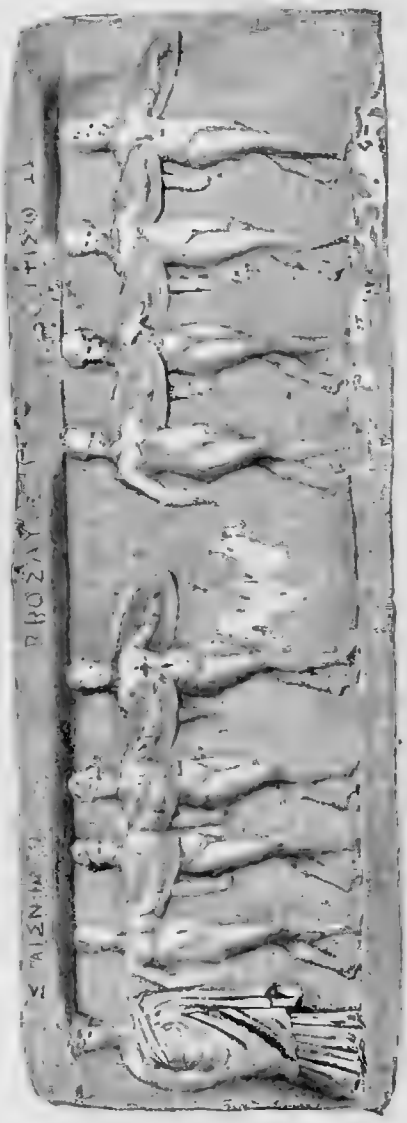
> You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet,
> Where is the Pyrrhic phalanx gone?

asks Byron. The invention of this dance is variously attributed to Pyrrhus, the Dioscuri, the Curetes, Athene, and to Achilles, in honour of Patroclus. It was accompanied by the flute, and danced by armed warriors, simulating warlike deeds, with all the proper manœuvres for attack and defence. The four divisions were, the Podism, or footing, a quick motion such as might be required for overtaking the enemy (and, alas! for fleeing from him ; but it has already been remarked that the Greeks had no affectations) ; the Xiphism, or sham fight ; the

Kosmos, with very high leaping or vaulting, a training for the jumping of ditches or walls; and, lastly, the Tetracomos, a square figure with slow, majestic measure.

Here, too, the warlike dancers bless our sight,
Their artful wandering and their laws of flight,
And unconfused return and inoffensive fight.

The Pyrrhic was often carried out on horseback, and, on the other hand, it might be merely indicated by Cheironomia. Properly it was a Dorian gymnastic dance, but it gave its name to a whole class of dances, and practically it covered the same ground as our ballet. Originally danced by men only, it developed into a mixed dance,



The Pyrrhic Chorus
(*From Schreiber-Lechner's "Atlas of Classical Antiquities"*)

and afterwards a female partner for each executant was added. Dædalus was said to have been the conceiver of this happy thought. His dance was that taught to the seven youths and maidens saved from the Cretan labyrinth by Theseus.

Xenophon describes a Mysian war dance with round shields to the sound of the flute. An Arcadian maiden was introduced and much applauded in this. (*Anabasis*, lib. vi.) Another of this warlike class, of which the subject was the invasion of India by Dionysos and Pentheus, was in honour of Dionysos. The victories of the deity over the Hindoos, and the history of Pentheus, were represented, the executants carrying thyrsi and torches instead of weapons.

The learned Scaliger pretended to be able to reproduce a Pyrrhic dance, and actually performed one in full costume before Maximilian I., much to that emperor's astonishment. Professor Meibom, too, tried to dance an ancient Greek dance to an ancient Greek air, before Queen Christina and the whole Swedish court; but although the attempts would have been peculiarly well worth seeing in an idle hour, their well-intentioned realism must have fallen far short of the genuine art; of which only faint outlines have been preserved for us, in spite of all the learned research.

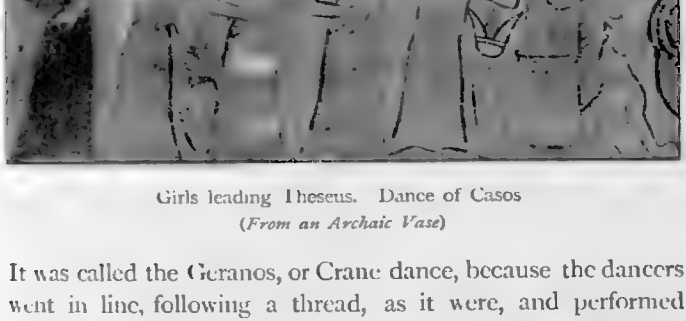
The Hormos, though graceful and lively, was a war dance invented by Lycurgus. It was formed by youths and maidens alternating, and representing the shape of a winding necklace. The men tried to outdo each other in the variety of their warlike positions, their partners following with modest and graceful steps. A leader, playing the lyre, regulated the movements of the rest. The whole dance pictured manly courage contrasted with feminine modesty, the maidens making slow movements to two or three steps of their partners, yet all these diversified actions were guided by the same music.

Some lines in the 'Iliad,' describing the shield of Achilles, are applicable equally to the Hormos and other war-dances.

> A figured dance succeeds, such once was seen
> In lofty Gnossus; for the Cretan Queen

Form'd, by Dædalian art, a comely band
Of youths and maidens, bounding hand in hand,
The maids in soft cymarrs of linen drest,
The youths all graceful in the glossy vest,
Of those the locks with flow'ry wreaths unroll'd,
Of these the sides adorned with swords of gold,
That, glittering gay, from silver belts depend:
Now all at once they rise, at once descend,
With well-taught feet; now shape in oblique ways,
Confus'dly regular the moving maze.

Or perhaps Homer had in his mind the Crane dance, representing the intricacies of the Cretan labyrinth. It has already been alluded to, but is worthy of a detailed description.



Girls leading Theseus. Dance of Casos
(*From an Archaic Vase*)

It was called the Geranos, or Crane dance, because the dancers went in line, following a thread, as it were, and performed evolutions similar to those of a flight of cranes. We see in Winckelmann's 'Monumenti Antichi' an ancient vase on which Theseus is portrayed. He holds the famous clue which saved him from the maze, while Ariadne, clad in a close-fitting Greek garment, which falls to the feet, bears in her two hands a thread. On such a model is this dance performed in modern Greece. It was introduced in the festival of Apollo at Delos by young Athenian theori, and by Delians. Those who distinguished themselves received as a reward valuable tripods which they dedicated to the gods, and the names of the victorious were

proclaimed by two Athenian heralds accompanying the theori. This great Delian festival, which survived to the Roman period, took place every five years in the spring and on the sixth day of the month. Artemis was first worshipped, and then Apollo. The maidens of Delos, crowned with flowers and garbed in festal attire, danced to joyful choruses round the altars of the two deities, and set forth in sacred ballets the story of the birth of Apollo and Artemis, with the adventures of their mother, Latona. Choruses and hymns followed, regulating the dancers, who held garlands to hang before the statue of Aphrodite. The theori, who were chosen from the noblest Athenians to offer special sacrifices to national gods, and had been conducted from Athens to Delos in a vessel of their own, were a brilliant group. After the sacrifice followed the dance in which the women imitated the movement of the island when it was still supposed to be tossed by the sea.

Following this was the Choregraphic figure-dance of the windings of the labyrinth, the Crane dance, already described and to be seen yearly in the street of the convent at Athens on the conclusion of the vintage. Here the peasants join hands, and precede their asses and mules, which are laden with grapes in panniers, in a very intricate figure. The leader waves a handkerchief, and in this detail Chandler points out a reference to Ariadne giving the clue. Parenthetically, it may be noted that the Choreutai engaged in theatrical performance of the Geranos were guided in the involutions of the maze by a design on the floor of the orchestra.

While all Greek dancing was founded upon a religious idea, that of the Delian feast was especially sacred. Such sacred dances had the same reverent character as those of the Hebrews. The chorus surrounded the altar while the sacrifice was burning, and sang airs which stimulated the dances. Many of these were imitative : such a one was that bearing the name Ajax. One, commemorative of Apollo's birth, pictured the supposed amusements of his youth ; sailors danced round, beating themselves with whips. Dances in honour of god-

desses were generally performed by women, but while the festivals of Artemis were held without much pomp in the Peloponnesus, solemn meetings took place at the mouth of the Alpheios, and the maidens danced at night there in the spring-time.

At Ephesus every year there were festivals in honour of Artemis. One of the ceremonies consisted in a dancing procession represented by Apelles. These processions, as Martial describes them (like those of mediæval times), were gross and licentious. Such also were the dances of Elis and the Dorian in honour of Artemis Cordax—they were almost orgies. No better were those of Artemis of Perga; the priests submitted the while to voluntary torture, a practice which occurred in all the cults of lunar deities in Asia Minor. The Greeks scarcely ever performed a religious function which had not dancing as part of the ceremony. Dances rehearsing the deeds of the gods were solemnised round the altar or statue, while hymns were sung in three parts: the Strophe, while turning from east to west; the Antistrophe, west to east; then the Epode, or end of the song, in front of the altar.



Girl in Armour, Dancing
(*From a Greek vase-painting, about* 450 B.C.)

In Sparta girls danced with one knee bared in honour of Athene, and in the illustration we see a girl dancing in armour.

Scenic or dramatic dances carry us back to the most artistic and refined part of Greece—Ionia and Athens.

Of the Emmeleia of Tragedy Plato says: 'There are two really beautiful dances, the martial Pyrrhic and the tragic Emmeleia.' According to Lucian, the latter owes its name to

a follower of Dionysos. All philosophers were full of praise of the elegance and majesty of this dance, and they encouraged its practice by every class of society. The Dionysiac or Bacchic festivals were entirely composed of the three dramatic dances—the Emmeleia, the Kordax, and the Sikinnis—tragic, comic, and satyric.[1] The movements of the chorus were necessarily in slow time, like the steps of the minuet, partly on account of the long robes worn, partly because this chorus was usually supplied by old men and matrons. The liveliest dances were those of the tragic chorus, when a joyful surprise or new hope was to be expressed. This was probably given in the manner of lyric songs ; the chorus leader (choragus or coryphæus) sang a solo, and the chorus performed the rhythmic movement. Thus the maiden chorus in the 'Septem' of Æschylus danced a fervid song in the hope that the protecting gods would give aid. In the 'Antigone' the chorus propose to approach the temples of the gods with dances that shall last all night long, and exclaim, 'Let Bakcheios, shaker of Thebai, lead off the dance.' Euripides provides a solo dance for Jocasta's joy on seeing her son once more ; and, by way of contrast, Electra (in the 'Orestes') dances in mad pain when all hope of salvation is lost. In the 'Eumenides' of Æschylus the chorus of furies amounted to fifty. Their rush into the orchestra, with terrifying gestures and horrid masks, struck the people, especially the women and children, with such terror that their number was reduced by law. (The incident may belong to the drama of Smyrna, an Ionian colony ; for many authors agree in saying that Athenian women never witnessed theatrical performances.)

Lucian, whom I quote frequently, and to whom I owe much information, observes that the floods of tears shed at the public theatres upon the dancers' presentment of sorrowful subjects were sufficient proof of their perfection in imitation.

[1] The tragic dance of the sixth century B.C. was of a wild and lively character. It became more solemn under Æschylus, in whose time dancing in tragedy reached its highest pitch of excellence. His long choruses allowed ample scope for the skill of the dancers. Towards the fourth century it declined in significance and in excellence.

The dancer needed great versatility of mind and deep sympathy of nature in order to excel in different characters, and express every emotion.

In those times the dance was accompanied by splendour of dress and scenery, and the power of song and music; it gave



Mænads dancing

play to tragic and comic works, and one of its charms lay in the decorum and moral tendency of the entertainment. Timocrates, upon his first sight of a theatrical dance, exclaimed: 'What exquisite enjoyment is this which I have so long sacrificed to the false pride of philosophy!'

There was an established standard of beauty and proportion for dancers. In Antioch, when a very little man appeared to dance the character of Hector, 'Well, here is Astyanax the son,' the audience cried, 'but where is Hector the father?' When a fat man came on he was begged to tread lightly and spare the floor.

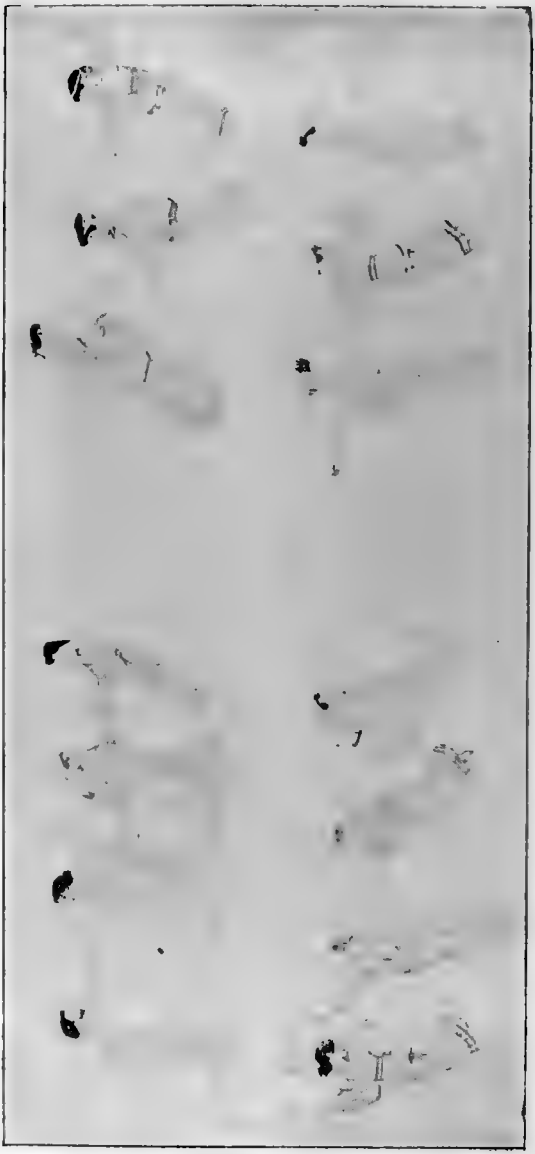
In the dramatic dance are found the germs of the Roman and Greek pantomime corresponding to our ballet. Lucius Apuleius describes with much charm a pantomimic ballet at Corinth, which resembled those of our day.

Professor Blackie observes: 'The tradition is to the effect that the lyrical drama, as we find it in the extant works of Æschylus, arose out of the dithyrambic hymns sung at sacred festivals of the ancient Hellenes in honour of their god Dionysos, or, as he is vulgarly called, Bacchus; hymns which were at first extemporised under the effect of the grape, and then sung by a regularly trained chorus, under the direction of the famous Methymnæan minstrel, Arion. The simplest form which such hymns, under such conditions, could assume, was that of a circular dance by a band of choristers round the statue or altar of the god in whose praise the hymn was sung. The dithyramb or Bacchic hymn was also called a circular hymn. In olden times it consisted of fifty men, then it was diminished to twelve, and arranged in the form of a military company, in regular rank and file. Such a chorus, therefore, was the grand central trunk out of which the Attic tragedy branched and bloomed to such fair luxuriance of verbal melody.'

Besides these, there were also various dances illustrative of joy and merriment, such as the Anthema, a flower dance, mostly sung by women at private assemblies, with the refrain:

> Where's my lovely parsley, say?
> My violets, roses, where are they?
> My parsley, roses, violets fair,
> Where are my flowers? Tell me where.

Also the civic and other profane dances; and the dances in



Girls dancing like Birds
(From a vase painting)

imitation of various animals, such as that in which girls copied the flapping of birds' wings (the material of their dress wound about arms and hands); the bear dance in honour of Artemis, and performed by very young girls dressed in saffron robes; and the owl dance, mentioned by Pollux, a Sikinnis or satirical dramatic dance, consisting in shading the eyes with the hands, or in turning the head to and fro like an owl.

Among mimetic dances—that is to say, dances meant to express an emotion or accompany the words of a chorus—the Hyporchema holds an important place of great antiquity; it is mentioned by Homer. It belongs to the cult of Apollo, and later on was practised in honour of Dionysos and Athene. The most beautiful of the Spartan dances was the Caryatis, performed in the village of Caryæ, and danced annually by the wealthiest damsels of Sparta, carrying on their heads flat baskets—*canea*—in which were deposited the sacred cake, chaplet, frankincense, and knife to slay the victim. The dance would sometimes sway to the song—'Advance your foot, young people, enjoy yourselves, and dance better.' These women with their loads probably formed the model of the architectural figures called Caryatides.

There is very little to say about the modern dances of Greece which has not been said about the ancient dances. Many have been found by recent travellers to correspond with those of old times. Mr. Theodore Bent, in his book on the Cyclades, describes several. There is no doubt that in Crete especially, where old customs prevail, the ancient dances are still popular.

The Curetes, or priests of Cybele, performed a martial dance, beating loudly on their shields. This practice was supposed to be in order to drown the cries of the infant Zeus, and to prevent his being eaten by his father Kronos, who was rather inclined to eat his surplus infants, especially when they cried. A dance representing this mythological detail was performed in Crete, and called Kronou Teknophagia.

The Wallachian is probably an ancient Bacchic dance,

performed by a small number who represent the vintners crushing the grape in the casks. The Candiote has already been described as the modern dance of the Labyrinth (see p. 45). Allied to it is the Crane dance, celebrating the return



Curetes dancing and beating on their Shields so as to drown the cries of the infant Zeus

(From a terra-cotta relief)

of spring, announced by the arrival of the cranes. In the Arnaöut we find an ancient military dance, led by a couple. The man holds a whip, stamping and cracking it as he runs

from one end of the group to the other. The rest follow, their hands interwoven.

ARNAÖUT, THE ALBANIAN DANCE [1]



[1] This is usually danced by the Albanians in full armour, and is supposed to be the ancient Pyrrhic dance.


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The Ionian is a duet, danced quietly and lightly, after a banquet. It is known in Smyrna and Asia Minor generally. For the May dance the women cover themselves with flowers, in honour of Flora. The song is a welcome to the goddess of May, and the dance is led by the most beautiful of the girls. The Easter dance of Megara reminds us of the ancient Hormus.

Wilder groups amuse themselves in the Pyrrhic dance of the Spacchiotes, danced in short kirtles, long boots, with a quiver of arrows and bent bow; the Klepht and Albanian dances, where a long chain of dancers is led by a coryphæus. He nods his head or waves a handkerchief, to mark the time. Childe Harold looked on as

> . . . Bounding hand in hand, man link'd to man,
> Yelling their uncouth dirge, long danced the kirtled clan.

Across the Ægean Sea we find many interesting dances. Savary describes that of Casos :

'The guests were merry when the noise of instruments caused us to leave the table. About twenty girls clad in white, with flowing robes and braided hair, entered the room. They were leading a youth who played the lyre, and accompanied the melody with a song. They arranged themselves in a circle, and invited me to dance. The circle we formed was peculiar by the way it was interwoven. The dancer does not give his hands to the two people nearest to him, but to the next two, so that we had our arms intertwined before and at the back of our neighbours, forming the ring of a double chain. In the centre stood the musician, playing and dancing at the same time.'

ISOLANO [1]



[1] Dance of the Islands of the Archipelago.



We see from these examples that the dance of modern Greece is not devoid of poetry and picturesqueness, and we may well conclude that if the dance among these degenerate sons is still so beautiful, that of the fathers must have flourished as an ideal of perfect art. Whether considered as a means of developing physical beauty, health, courage (as when a dance was commanded immediately before a battle, to inspire the warriors and stir their blood); whether looked upon as the highest means of worship, motive was always present. The dance was not aimless gyrating, but had a significance of its own.

THE DANCE IN ROME

The necessity of expressing strong emotion, which exists in every human being, finds a translation in different amusements, according to the character of the nation or individual. While Greece had brought culture to perfection, and had greatly embellished its festivals and recreations, that of Rome was as yet in its infancy; it was cold and severe in character, and lacked the enthusiasm and brilliant imagination of the Hellenes.

Young, righteous, solid, heroic Rome danced very little in the time of Romulus. But one dance is known; and it was performed only by the men, no doubt with a due sense

of importance. But it is always and everywhere through women that manners change; thus it happened that Numa, inspired by Egeria, became an enthusiast on the art of dancing. In order to invest it with greater dignity, he introduced the dance as part of the cult of Mars. Before this the Romans had been contented with a somewhat dry ritual, but the zeal of the king pressed into the service of Mars twelve priests, among whose duties was the performance of a solemn sacrificial dance. They were called Salii, and their dance, Salian.

All the dances afterwards introduced into Rome in honour of the deities originated in the Salian dance. Possessing little or no original artistic genius, the Romans borrowed every idea from neighbours; they adopted uncomplainingly all the gods of Greece, and set up temples, priests, and, above all, dances, for every possible and impossible idol. Thus absorbed into the Roman mind through its use in religious worship, the dance began to make its way into the profane life of the city. Three hundred and ninety years after its foundation Rome was visited by the plague, and, in order to propitiate the gods, and also to divert the thoughts of the people, the Ludion dance was invented. According to Livy, it was performed by Etruscans specially engaged for the purpose, together with flute players.

On the first of May the youths and maids of Rome danced in the fields to the sound of instruments. They would then gather green boughs, and while dancing carry them back to the city, where every house was to be adorned with the spoil. The parents and friends of the young people awaited them in the streets, and tables laden with viands stood prepared for the feast, after which songs and dances began anew. Primitive art effected here a fellow-feeling between all classes; patricians, functionaries, and plebeians, united by one universal sentiment of joy and gratitude, decked themselves in brave green leaves, and formed one family.

The funeral dances of Athens were also introduced. Funeral

music accompanied pantomimic representations of the most prominent characteristics of the departed, and a dancer portrayed the chief actions of his life. This performer was called the archmime; he never flattered, and was supposed to be unbiassed and absolutely just. Grotesquely horrible, he wore the clothes of the dead man, with a mask like the face of the lamented one, and was as funny as he could be, on and off duty. A story is told of an archmime under Tiberius, who cried out to a corpse to 'tell Augustus that the legacies which he left to the people have not yet been paid.' Tiberius sent for the buffoon, paid him the legacy, and sent him to torture and death, ordering him to inform Augustus that all was being settled. Suetonius relates that the archmime Faon, when personating Vespasian at his funeral, asked those in authority how much the ceremony would cost. 'A hundred thousand sexterces,' they said. 'Then give me one hundred sexterces, and throw me into the Tiber,' exclaimed Faon, thus marking the stinginess of the dead emperor.

With the decadence of Greece all arts sought a refuge in Rome, where manners softened, and music and the dance came into high favour. In solemn processions the magistrates appeared in their robes, and women danced before the statue of Cybele. Athletic exercises and dances were the material of every rural feast, such as the Agonalia, founded by Numa in honour of Janus; the Lupercalia, a festival instituted in memory of the she-wolf who preserved Romulus and Remus; the Palilia, or feast of the goddess of the shepherds, celebrated by the shepherds in the fields. They feasted and danced round fires made with straw and chaff. It is thought that originally this was done to ward off dangers.

In the Cerelia, where women were chiefly engaged, a band of maidens draped as wood-nymphs, with flowing hair and wreaths of flowers, was formed round another woman personating the goddess.

Though dancing of a dull and severe type was probably as old among the Romans as Rome itself, it was not until the

reign of Augustus that it reached its full development. At that time it was introduced into the theatre, and Lucian relates that the pantomime dancers carried the art to an incredible perfection. This was a great change from the Rome which Horace describes: 'At Rome, for a long time, a man had no other pleasure and employment than to open his door at dawn to explain the law to his clients, and to lay out his money on good security.'

When, under Augustus, the dance was at its highest period of favour and perfection, there were no fewer than three thousand foreign women dancers within the walls of Rome. Their presence was deemed a necessity, and when public expenditure was cut down, foreign teachers of philosophy and other learned men were dismissed, but the three thousand dancing women were kept on.

The Roman pantomimic dance was not a dance in our sense of the word; it consisted of expressive rhythmical movements of head and hands, though it would be a mistake to suppose that the rest of the body was immovable. The events of antiquity and the several human passions were so faithfully pictured by these gestures, that the spectators were often moved to tears. Moore speaks of eloquent feet, but in Rome it was the turn of eloquent hands, and Petronius remarks the eloquence of the dance. Quintilian says of the language of the hands that it is the universal language of nations, and this was no doubt true in ancient times, when this gesture speech was even richer than it is among the South Italians at the present day. A performance of dancing was given, under Nero, before a foreign king. He begged Nero to make him a present of one of the dancers; 'for,' he said, 'I can thus make myself understood by aliens.' When Augustus reigned the celebrated dancers, Pylades and Bathyllus, appeared upon the stage. The one excelled in tragic, the other in comic scenes. They were clever enough to perform whole plays by gesture and step alone. At that period the most cultured persons practised the art, and a dancing-master was a member of every patrician

household. Seneca called this fashion a regular disease. All young girls were taught music and dancing: not only steps, but the art of moving the upper body and the arms with perfect grace. Traces of this grace of movement and dignity of carriage still distinguish the women of modern Rome. In ancient days a noble gait, as well as a soft, low voice, was thought to be an 'excellent thing in woman.' An epitaph of the time of the Republic ran: 'She was of gentle speech and of noble gait.'

Greek dances were much taught in Rome. Every variety of the Pyrrhic was performed, mostly by slaves or by hired men and women; the latter came chiefly from Andalusia and Syria. In later times the dancing became very licentious, and was denounced by Cato and Cicero. As Cicero, however, had a bad figure, he could hardly be called an impartial censor. He it was who vexed his soul because Roscius's gestures were as eloquent as Cicero's words. Some dances became merely ugly, consisting of high jumping and unnatural movements. Cato thought it horrible to watch a man twisting his limbs so outrageously.

Some wonderful mimic dances are painted on the walls of Pompeii and Herculaneum. They may have been noticed by Taglioni during her travels; for Czerwinski, in a short account of Taglioni's visit to the theatre of Vicenza in 1842, says, that when she was asked if she could form to herself an idea of the ancient dance, she simply raised her gown a little on both sides, and by this simple gesture at once showed that she was in harmony with the surroundings. She immediately reminded her travelling companions of the well-known antique statue of a dancer. She moved her feet slowly, remaining almost on the same spot, and swayed her head gently to and fro as if she were listening to the melody of Euterpe's pipe, and the folds of her gown moulded themselves softly round her limbs like 'woven music.'

CHAPTER III

THE DANCES OF SAVAGES

THE dance among savages may be considered a just indication of their character ; it plays a very important part in their daily life—so important that there are races who have special dances for every day in the year and for every occasion in the day. There are people, moreover—some African tribes might be instanced—who could not live a single week without their dances. Nations which are in their infancy dance with the greatest ease and pleasure ; the Negro, for example, begins to skip at the mere sound of the most rudimentary music, even under a broiling sun. Captain Stedman saw 'a newly-imported Negro slave of Guiana figuring and footing it for nearly two hours to his shadow on the wall.' Livingstone, watching a savage dance, wondered how such exertions could give pleasure. 'It is very hard work,' replied the dancer, 'but it is very nice.'

The subject of dancing among savage tribes is so very exhaustive that it would require a volume of its own if treated adequately, and it can only be faintly indicated in this chapter. However strange some of the dancing customs of savages may appear to us, they are not consequently to be condemned. The advance of civilisation tends to weaken the picturesque aspect of life and to reduce everything to a smooth uniformity. Old rites are everywhere fast vanishing, without leaving a trace behind, and when this applies to the dances of savage peoples their disappearance is all the more to be deplored. For it is my firm belief, as I have already explained in the introduction, that all dances were originally a form of worship, and therefore

the dance of the savage has great significance as an indication of his primitive religion. Where we can clearly prove that the dance has a purely secular character, we may conclude that the race possessing such a dance has outgrown its very primitive history.

It is, however, most difficult if not impossible—to prove



Dance of the Island of Jamaica
(*From an Engraving after A. Brunais*)

that a dance among savages is purely secular, for the religion of the savage pervades every one of his actions. It is not with him a mantle to be assumed on high days and holy days, or a convenience for occasions of great distress; his religion is inseparable from his daily life, and in his daily life the dance takes a large share.

But, again, the religion of the savage, like that of the little child, is essentially egotistical. He invokes his deity so that he may get what he wants, or that the evil which threatens may be warded off. Mr. J. G. Frazer, the author of 'The Golden Bough,' tells me he believes that the more closely savage dances are looked into, the more prominent will appear their magical character. He thinks that a great many are pantomimes, intended to produce by 'sympathetic magic' the events which they imitate. What the savage mostly cares for are love, success



Buffalo Dance
(*From Catlin's 'North American Indian Portfolio'*)

in the chase, and prowess in war, and all these he thinks procurable by mimetic dancing. The representation of his wishes or of certain events will, in his belief, result in the realisation of such wishes or events. Courtship is a common subject for exhibition in savage dances. The story is often told in a very unsophisticated manner, which would need the pen of Juvenal to describe. Dances representing the chase are numerous. They may be intended either to imitate the prey itself, and thus to ensure an abundance of game be it buffalo or kanga-

roo, eagle or bear—or it may be a form of rejoicing over a successful hunt. Sometimes, again, regret is expressed at the slaughter of the animal; thus the Aleutian Islanders, in their mimetic dance, conducted in horrible masks, tell the story of a sportsman who cries for grief at having killed a lovely bird. The bird revives, changes into a beautiful woman, and is wooed and won by the hunter. Mr. Francis Galton speaks of a dance performed by some Damaras after they had killed two men



Ball-play Dance
(*From Catlin's 'North American Indian Portfolio'*)

and acted unjustly to them. This would probably be a kind of purification ceremony.

War dances are general, and of many varieties. They are sometimes a preparation for war, corresponding to the Pyrrhic dance of classic period, and to our drill. Such, for instance, is the 'No Flight' dance of Dakota. Young men are instructed in its movements by a sort of drill, accompanied by the recital of heroic deeds. These dances are rare, for they denote a foresight which the savage seldom possesses; but dances pre-

ceding battle, and having for their object the incitement of the warriors to a state of frenzy, are described by various travellers. It has been said that, having by means of frantic movements worked themselves up to a pitch of exaltation, the dancers are liable to forget their pantomimic character, and occasionally chop off a head or two of their own brothers or friends.

To recall by means of gestures the actions of brave men must always have been part of the triumph, yet it is alleged that the savage is too practical a being to waste his efforts in



Scalp Dance of the Dakotas
(*From 'Indian Tribes of the United States'*)

representing the past; he lives in the present and looks to the near future, leaving the past unregarded. It might, therefore, be supposed that dances held as a commemorative ceremony belong to those natives who are on their way to a higher sphere of culture. Nevertheless, it seems to me a moot point. When the North American Indian performs a scalp-dance by torch-light, is it not in celebration of his victory? Do not the Maori warriors, during the dance, by an admirable movement of precision, all put out their tongues at a given instant, thus implying

that they despise their vanquished enemy? And do not the natives of the Soudan, returning worn out from a successful battle, still keep on dancing until they drop from sheer exhaustion? It has been said that these things may be done in order to propitiate the ghosts of their slain enemies, and it is a plausible theory; but the fact remains that, through some cause or another, many savage tribes have dances after a victory, and that they keep up these dances in spite of their arduous labour in the fight. When the Dakota Indians, 'having killed, come home,' they paint themselves black, and show every sign of mourning, 'singing war-dirges to the souls which they have disembodied;' and it is quite probable that the scalp-dance they hold on reaching their village is another propitiatory measure.

Another very frequent practice, and a world-wide one, is performed by the warriors' wives, who keep up a dance, often lasting day and night, while their husbands are in battle. The women believe that this imitative rite will bring success to the warriors; also that the action will preserve their husbands from danger during sleep, and from the vengeance of the ghosts of the slain. The faithful wives fear to cease gyrating for an instant, lest that instant should prove fatal to the absent ones.

Next in order to the dances of love, hunting, and war come those used as exorcism—that is to say, for the purpose of warding off death, sickness, or sorcery. The votaries of such rites, similar in that respect to the Shakers of the Lebanon or to the followers of the Koran, whirl round until their movements graduate into frenzy. Foaming at the mouth, the dancers deem themselves inspired and gifted with powers of prophecy, of curing disease, or of dismissing evil spirits. All these dances are full of mysterious meanings.

The student of the history of dancing is struck by the fact that the notion of death has had at all periods, and among a great number of races, a place of its own in connection with the dance in one form or another. That savage tribes should have death dances is surprising, because it is inconsistent with their nature to represent in pantomime abstract ideas. There must be a

practical meaning attached to their custom. It would be interesting to discover a connection between the death dances of so many primitive peoples and the dances of death by mediæval Christians. The latter probably introduced the figure of Death at their banquets, balls, and festivals because they thought it right to familiarise themselves with the idea ; for their faith was simple and their belief was strong. The savage, however, has by no means an ascetic turn of mind, and his object in this lugubrious occupation must be one diametrically opposed to that of the mediæval devotee. In all probability, therefore, primitive man practises the death dance as a form of exorcism, hoping to drive death away by what Mr. Frazer so aptly calls 'sympathetic magic.'

Mr. Brough Smyth states that, among the aborigines of Victoria, not only the death dance, but a development of a resurrection dance, is found. The dancers hold in their hands branches, with which they stroke each other's shoulders in rhythmic fashion. Forming long rows, then semicircles, they unite finally in a compact circular group. They then fall to the ground, hiding their heads under the green boughs, and, by remaining prone and immovable for some time, represent death. An old man, the leader of the dance, suddenly gives a signal by waving his branch over the group. All leap to their feet instantaneously, and break into a joyful dance, symbolic of the resurrection of the soul.

Chateaubriand, speaking of savages, says : 'Dancing forms part of every action of their lives. They dance for weddings, to receive a guest, to smoke a calumet, to rejoice over the birth of a child, and, above all, for the dead.' But before examining some variations of the death dance, I will speak of allied rites, such as the healing dances, which include some kinds of exorcism, and various 'ghost' and 'devil' dances.

Dances instituted for healing disease are so numerous that it would be impossible to follow them all. They are performed either by the medicine-men or the medicine-women ; by the friends of the invalid or by the sick man himself.

The medicine-man of primitive races, it may be observed parenthetically, has many avocations. He sometimes combines the businesses of priest, physician, musician, prophet, rain-maker, and lawyer. His full title can best be summed up as 'mystery-man.'

Dancing is universally known to be conducive to the preservation of health, and it may be remembered how Captain Cook attributed his crew's immunity from disease to their daily practice of the hornpipe. There is no doubt that the bodily exercise of the dance may prove beneficial in some complaints, and the use of the *Tarantella* of Naples and the *Tigritiya* of the Tigris Valley is evidence in its favour. But it is more difficult to understand how the dancing of a doctor or doctoress round a sick man's couch; how the antics of friends and relatives, shaking gourds filled with pebbles, and beating kettles and howling, how this confusion of hideous noises and bustle can act as a preventive measure against disease and death. For a long time I puzzled over this form of dance, until I was enlightened by Mr. J. G. Frazer's paper on 'Burial Customs as Illustrative of the Primitive Theory of the Soul;' and as it furnishes a full explanation I cannot do better than quote the passage *in extenso* :—

It is well known that, according to primitive man, the soul of a sleeper departs from his body to wander far away in dreamland; indeed, the only distinction which early man makes between sleep and death is that sleep is a temporary, while death is a permanent, absence of the soul. Obviously, then, on this view sleep is highly dangerous to the sick man, for if in sleep his soul departs, how can we be sure that it will come back again? Hence, in order to ensure the recovery of a sick man, one of the first requisites is to keep him from sleeping. With this intention the Circassians will dance, play, and tell stories to a sick man by the hour. Fifteen to twenty young fellows, naturally selected for the strength of their lungs, will seat themselves round his bed and make night hideous by singing in chorus at the top of their voices, while from time to time one will create an agreeable variety by banging with a hammer on a ploughshare which has been thoughtfully placed for the purpose by the sick man's bed.

Among the Pehuenches of the Argentine, a sick man will be carried out in the sun ; women and wizards dance round until they become exhausted, and then some horrible ceremonies are gone through, at the end of which the patient, *nolens volens*, is forced to join in the measure. A drum is a necessary accompaniment to this form of exorcism.

In Jamaica, the Obeah, or medicine-man, begins the cure by a dance which he performs himself. After he has beaten time long enough on a noisy instrument or implement, he falls to beating the sick man ; he shakes him, stamps upon him, dances round him or with him—in fact, uses such gentle arts that the invalid is bound to recover, or to die. No wonder that a doctor fusses over his patient when, as in Vancouver and Columbia, he runs the risk of being put to death himself if he fails to cure his charge. There it is believed that the non-recovery of an invalid is due to the deficiency of will to effect a cure, and not to the inability of the wise man or woman.

Catlin was witness of a scene where a dying man was surrounded by several hundred spectators, formed in a ring and leaving a space of about forty feet for the doctor with his operations :—

> He approached the ring with a slow, halting step, his body and head covered with the skin of a yellow bear, his own head inside the mask of the bear, its claws dangling over his wrists and ankles. He shook a frightful rattle and brandished a medicine spear or magic wand. Added to all this din were his imitations of the yelps of an Indian dog, and of the grunting and snorting of a bear. These were incantations to the good and bad spirits on behalf of his patient, who was rolling and groaning in the agonies of death. The doctor jumped upon him, pawing him about and rolling him in every direction. This lasted for half an hour, when, to the surprise of the audience, the man died, and the medicine-man danced off to his quarters.

The medicine-women of the Moluches are described by Molina in his account of Araucania. These ladies seek the relief of their patients by singing, beating a drum, and shaking a rattle at them. Such modes of treatment, novel to us, may

be beneficial in cases of low spirits, and are well worth a trial, but among barbarians they are no doubt associated with symbolical and magical practices—in a word, with the mysteries. Lucian says : 'But this all men know, that most people say of those who reveal the mysteries, that they dance them out.' And Mr. Andrew Lang, commenting on Lucian, remarks that the author obviously intended here to say that the matter of the mysteries was set forth in *ballets d'action*. To this class must belong the medicinal dancing rites of many aborigines. In New Mexico, for instance, Mr. A. W. Buckland notes that a sacred lodge is erected for the performance of the dance which cures illness. A rattle and whizzer, or bull-roarer, accompany the rites, and sacred medicines are drunk by the patient, the doctor, and the spectators, while massage is not neglected. Part of the performance consists in the sudden appearance of a man covered with evergreens and resembling the English 'Jack in the Green.'

The Iroquois have dances held by medicine-men ; they are various, but all performed in the dark. On the death of one of the doctors a dance is held by the rest of the fraternity. It is not known whether any surviving patients take part in the ceremony.

Many attempts at curing are nothing more than a form of exorcism to frighten away the demons who cause sickness or other trouble. Devil dances are found in many lands. Tennent has ably described that of the Veddahs of Ceylon :

> In order to avert storms and lightning, and when sick, they send for devil dancers to drive away the evil spirit, who is believed to have inflicted the disease. The dance is executed before an offering of something eatable placed on a tripod of sticks, the dancer having his head and girdle decorated with green leaves. At first he shuffles with his feet to a plaintive air, but by degrees he works himself into a state of great excitement and action, accompanied by moans and screams, and during his paroxysm he professes to be inspired with instructions for the cure of the patient.

The Singalese professional devil dancer, who is also a

necromancer, is called Yakka Duro. In a poem descriptive of the Ceylon system of demonology, we read :

Death dances in the assembly and terrifies the people, having hold of the reddish and black dart. . . .

Having looked sternly with both eyes and terrified the people round about by perplexing their minds, now Death having danced and got money, you may depart.

The Burmese of to-day sing and dance beside the coffin of a dead priest.

The Tibetans call their mystery play the 'dance of the Red Tiger Devil.' It has been said that the origin of the dance is founded on the idea of expelling the old year with its evil spirits, and gaining the favour of the good spirits of the new year. Probably all these Devil dances in remote times were associated with human sacrifices and possibly with cannibalism. At a later period they assumed a Buddhist or even a Christian meaning. Missionaries have often thought it meet to adopt local customs. For instance, pretty dances were performed in Goa, about 1650, by convert boys, who held garlands, and danced round a pillar crowned with a huge flower in the shape of a tulip, from which became visible the figures of the Virgin and Child. The Jesuits were of opinion that such dances were useful under existing conditions. The Lamas of the monastery of Himis also execute devil dances representing a wrestling-match between devils and saints, in which the latter are conquered, their souls being carried away into the Buddhist hell, the dark Naraka ; while demons, or rather the figures of demons, which have remained on the scene, perform a sort of triumphant dance, purposed to mock the vanquished saints. They brandish lances round a human figure drawn on the floor, and go wildly through the antics of a diabolic saraband, filling the spectators with terror. Buddha all the while smiles down upon them from the temple with unmoved gravity. To this convent, situated on a high rock which crowns a mountain rising out of the sacred waters of the Indus, pilgrims flock from all parts—Buddhists from Ladak, Tibetans from Lhassa in their long

Chinese gowns, Hindoos in their dalmaticas, Mongols dressed in skins—in fact, all the ancient races from the high tableland of Asia, and all observing a solemn religious silence.[1]

Examples of Devil dances are far too various to be enumerated. The custom often merges into the driving out of the ghost of a dead person. Mr. Frazer quotes an instance from the manners of the Kakhyens of Northern Burmah, on the Chinese frontier, where a death dance, having the object of expelling the ghost out of the house, and 'accelerating his departure by a liberal application of the stick,' was witnessed by Dr. Anderson and his companion, Colonel Sladen, who, in the words of Mr. Frazer, 'joined in the lugubrious dance, and exerted themselves to such good purpose that, after two turns, the ghost fairly took to his heels and bolted out of the house, hotly pursued by the *premier danseur* with a stick.' This conception of sending away the ghost of the deceased may be a root idea, and the key to the numerous funeral dances existing all over the world at every period of its history. In these dances, which serve the purpose of a spoken incantation, many savages paint their bodies with symbolic signs. The Moquis have drawings of snakes; others, again, pick out their ribs with white clay, to copy skeletons. In Cayenne the dancers wear a sort of straw dress and mask, much resembling a hayrick. One of the company sweeps round with a long whip, personifying Death, and each of the dancers takes up the part in his turn.

Riedel relates that among a tribe of Northern Celebes a war dance is performed on the ground owned by the deceased on the third or fourth day after his death. His friends are dressed in war costume and armed with shield and spear, to frighten away the soul, so that it may not return to torment the inhabitants of the hut.

In Central Brazil death festivities are held in the middle of the night. Professor von den Steinen found that they consisted in digging up the bones of those who had died a few weeks before, and dancing round them, with funeral songs.

[1] The Devil dance in the Lamasery of Himis has been described by E. F. Knight in 'Where Three Empires Meet.'

BOWRO—CENTRAL BRAZIL. SONGS THAT ARE SUNG AT THEIR FUNERAL DANCES

(By permission of Professor von den Steinen)

First Men's Song



Second Song, by Men and Women



They decorate each bone with drawings, and ornament the skull with feathers. These ceremonies last several weeks, after which the bones are re-buried in an urn. Only the most distinguished Indians can aspire to be honoured by such a ceremony. A more pathetic dance is reported by Professor von den Steinen from the same country. Indians, in this celebration, act as though the dead person were present; they speak to his impersonation and shower caresses upon it.

In Africa dancing forms a part of the funeral. Laing says that the Sulma 'bury their dead in perfect silence. Within a month they assemble again round the grave, the men dancing and shouting the Yelle, the women playing and singing.' A variation of this practice has been noticed by Baker at Latuka, where the men were dressed in leopard or monkey skins, and adorned with ostrich feathers, carrying bells round their waists, and going through strange antics. The women went through a



Bear Dance
(*From Catlin's 'North American Indian Portfolio'*)

separate dance in slow measure, while the children formed another group, keeping time with their feet.

Miss A. Blandford Edwards wondered if the habit common in Nubia of dancing at a grave belonged to 'savage Africa,' or whether it was an old Egyptian tradition, and she decided that it was Ethiopian. Mr. Walleschek believed that the custom could be traced back to the original population of Africa, before the era of Egyptian civilisation, and that it was handed down from these tribes to ancient civilised Egypt.

The ceremony has additional solemnity in Abyssinia, where, upon the death of a man of rank and influence, twelve judges, generally old men between sixty and seventy years of age, perform a funeral dance. In most dances of this class masks are worn, and it is curious to note that in Europe, until quite recent times, masks were usual at dances.

With the savage, dancing is a grave business. Primitive man is very much like a child, and a child naturally detests



A Dancing Dress in Central Brazil
(By permission from Professor von den Steinen)

levity and banter; childhood is so intensely serious. Being an important function with the savage, he dons for the occasion his best attire or non-attire. We have already remarked that for death or medicine dances he paints his body with symbolic patterns. Some wear only leaves on the feet and feathers in the hair, some will only carefully anoint their bodies and their raven tresses with cocoanut oil; but many, in direct contrast with the modern style of undress in ball-rooms, assume a dancing

attire, even when their usual state is one of nudity. While the Arawaks paint their bodies with designs of birds, and powder their hair red for mourning, other tribes possess an endless number of masks and very extraordinary dancing-dresses. Professor von den Steinen found in Central Brazil 'a dancing-dress made of straw, about ten or eleven yards wide round the bottom, and too heavy for carrying away. It was constructed like a huge crinoline, and had five straw-covered hoops. One of the Indians crept into this house-like costume, put on a mask, and twirled round as fast as his monster cage would allow him.' With the care spent upon such luxuries the first step is made in primitive art. Professor Haddon, in his work on the dances of the Torres Straits, shows a representation of a dancing petticoat worn by men, and worn only for the dance. 'It is made of the sprouting leaves of the cocoanut palm. The shoots are of a pale yellow colour, and the shredded leaves fall like a fringe round the thighs.' The same author describes and gives drawings of extremely handsome masks and head-dresses worn also exclusively for the dance. We notice that among savages the handsomest adornments are usually worn by men, reminding us of the gorgeous plumage of male birds. The male dancer of the Torres Straits will wear flowers in his hair.

Apart from the impulse to artistic work engendered by the dance, a benefit is conveyed by it in savage, or so-called savage, districts, through its use as a means of uniting tribes. It is a show of friendship and a truce between rival factions, just as private dances are given by a single member of the tribe who has taken an affection for another member, and desires to demonstrate his feeling with a dance.

Among us music and dancing are two distinct arts, but in the Australian plain, in the wild forests of Brazil, along the swampy shores of African rivers, or on the American prairie, dancing and song are still one single art expressive of concord and peace. We are taught our steps by dancing-masters; they show us how to form the figures; but the untutored savage moves in rhythm naturally, and he copies his figures from the

world around him — from the emu, the kangaroo, the bear, the frog, the butterfly. It strikes every traveller as strange that the savage, who has evidently attended no dancing academy, dances so well, and especially that he never makes a mistake in the most complicated move. Dr. Boase enlightens us on that point by remarking that whosoever makes a mistake in the dance is killed on the spot; so no wonder that perfection is aimed at. Often a great many tribes will meet for a dance, and during this meeting all enmity is suspended; and, as dancing feasts



Snow-shoe Dance

are frequently affairs which last over several weeks, it is easy to perceive that the dance makes for moral welfare.

When the Warrau Redmen wish to settle disputes between kindred settlements, they perform a dance, in which all men and boys take part, each one carrying a large shield made of the leaf-stalks of the palm. Then a contest, accompanied by dancing, takes place, the vegetable shields being the only weapon, and whichever side conquers is considered to have the right cause. Mr. Oldfield says: 'When some gifted individual

has invented a new song or dance, a grand merrymaking is resolved upon. Friends and enemies are alike welcome, and all animosity is buried during the festivities.' Truly the dance and music combined 'have charms to soothe the savage breast.' In Australia, two tribes which wish to make friends dance a corroberri together, and in Fiji, whoever can teach a new dance is amply rewarded.

Most merely friendly contests are decided by the skill of the performers, either in continuing the movements, in singing loudest, or in making the most hideous faces, the last being a much valued accomplishment. The Araucanians dance in jerky steps, assuming grotesque poses to a dirge-like tune; but when once they have started, it seems impossible to stop either musicians or dancers. Their performance winds up in a great promenade, in which all take part, men, women, and children, howling, gesticulating, and marching truly in Indian file. The Loangas try deliberately, one by one, to make the spectators laugh by their contortions during the dance.

If one Greenlander thinks another has not behaved fairly to him, he shows no anger beyond composing an ironical poem, repeating it, with song and dance, to his household, until all know it by heart. A formal challenge is made, and accepted by the original offender; the two parties exercise their satirical powers upon each other in public, and the whole population adjudges the victory. Our methods during a general election are almost exactly similar, but do not invariably keep the opposing parties below boiling point. The Eskimos have a drum dance, which is held generally during their great summer meetings, in which they bandy satirical songs on the subject of their grievances or quarrels, and the group that can dance longest, or that evokes the loudest laughter, is the victorious litigant. Here is indeed an easy way of settling quarrels and inflicting punishment. Yet Dalager tells us that 'there is nothing against which missionaries preach more vehemently than they do against this dance, affirming that it is the occasion of all sorts of misbehaviour.' The author goes on to say that

'if people danced to such good purpose among us, we should shortly see every second moralist and advocate transformed into a dancing-master.'

Among the harmless pleasures of a savage dance is one reported by Mr. Boeck, who has discovered that in Java the dance concludes with the man kissing his partner. This good old custom prevailed in this realm during Queen Elizabeth's reign, and, as Mr. Chappell quaintly remarks, 'no doubt it added a charm to the dance.'

But there yet remains to be described the most important of all the functions of savage dances—namely, the dance as an initiation rite. The most sacred ceremonies are those in which a boy is initiated into the status of manhood. Professor Haddon remarks that, before that event, a lad ranks as a woman, and we know that amongst certain tribes an uninitiated woman ranks as an animal. However, the initiation rites are mostly held for men, and, as nearly everywhere they are of a very mysterious nature, it is not easy to learn much about them. In order to obtain full knowledge, a traveller would have to be initiated himself, and, as this must be a very rare occurrence, we have but very fragmentary evidence on this, the most important of all savage dances. There is a certain mystery dance in Eastern Dakota which verges upon the initiation ceremony in its perfection. The Dakota aspirants go through concentric evolutions, each being provided with a 'mystery sack,' containing grass-roots, the bark of tree-roots, swansdown, and buffalo-hair. The rules laid down for a lad on his initiation are framed on moral principles. He must revere the sack, he must do honour to all those who belong to the dance, he must keep many sacred feasts, he must not listen to slander, he must not steal; and a woman must not have more than one husband.

The initiation dances described by Professor Haddon appear to be typical, and I will quote some passages of his own account of them :—

In the Torres Straits the initiation ceremony was followed by the recognition ceremony. . . . The dancing took place on the

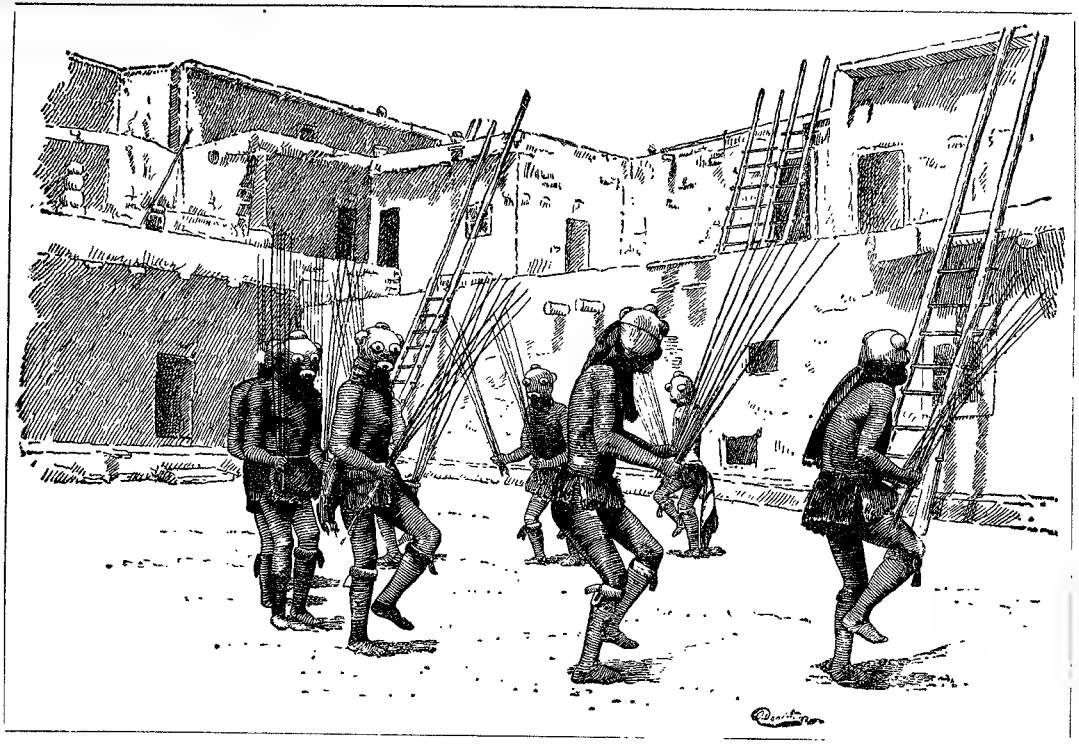
smooth sand beach which stretches between the village and the sea. The second initiation dance is a public ceremony, and all may witness it. Women and children sit in a confused crowd along the fence, the newly initiated lads occupying a prominent position. The men and musicians are grouped at one end of the throng, and behind them are the performers of the sacred dances.

After some preliminary antics, some ten Daumer-le advance and jump about on both legs in a more or less crouching attitude, and rapidly beat their chests with the palms of both hands, momentary intervals occurring between each series of beats. Then they retreat. These men personify the Torres Straits pigeon (*Carpophaga luctuosa*). Like all the other performers, their bodies are covered with red earth, but these have their forearms painted black, recalling the black wing-feathers of the pigeon. The legs below the knees were also blackened. With a whirl and a rush a revolving group of men sweep across the sand-beach. There is an inner circle of young men, each of whom brandishes a stone club in the left hand, and bears a red stick in his right. The old men who form the outer circle have an arm-guard, with its cassowary feather ornament, on the left arm. They carry a stick, but not a club. The circular movement takes place in the direction of from left to right—that is, with the left side to the centre of the circle.

These operations are watched by the three Zogo-le, who slowly and sedately march along, till they come opposite to the spectators, and then they stand still. The reddened bodies of the Zogo-le were entirely covered with white feathers, and a mask of similar feathers obscured the features; an extra large arm-guard, 'zogokadig,' ensheathed the left forearm, and five rods were held in the right hand. Although they were visible to the women, the personality of the Zogo-le was supposed to be unknown to them, and something dreadful would happen should it be disclosed.

The old women heap up food in front of the Zogo-le, and the ceremony, as usual, concludes with a big feast.

The dances of the Zuñi, so well described by Mr. Cushing and Dr. Fewkes, partake of a semi-religious character. Dr. Fewkes's account mainly deals with the summer ceremonials of the Zuñi and their many rain dances. As he went among them armed, not only with a kodak to reproduce the dance and the costume, but also with a phonograph to reproduce the words and melodies of the dance song, his account is



A CEREMONY OF THE 'CLOWNS' ON THE MORNING OF THE HAY-A-MASHEQUE DANCE IN ZUÑI

(Walter Fewkes)

of the highest interest; and the description he gives of certain of the dances, in which there is always a spice of fun, proves that some of the ceremonies belong to remote antiquity. From this report we see that the summer solstice is the great dancing period in Zuñi, and in studying the various dances of primitive races as well as those of semi-barbarians—nay, in tracing the origin of many civilised dances—we find that the summer and winter solstices are the two principal epochs when dancing, especially gregarious dancing, takes place. We could cite instances from the dances of the Hindoos and the ancient Aztecs of Mexico, and bring it all back to our own Mayings and Yuletide festivals connected with dancing. This, again, may be due to 'sympathetic magic.' The sun being the universal benefactor of mankind, dances were held—and are held—to imitate its apparent rotation, and thus to induce it by means of mimetic movements to return after a period of disappearance; or it is welcomed on its return in spring. The greater number of the dances performed at the time of solstices are circular dances, some of them showing plainly an imitation of astronomical phenomena. Our ancient roundabout has a direct reference to the movements of the planets; and the dances of the Incas, performed in circles of different sizes, and rotating at different degrees of velocity, were no doubt sun dances. The Saxon, who, in honour of the return of the sun, kept the festival of Thor, performed the same rite as the Greenlander of to-day or the Zuñi of New Mexico. An accurate study of these various dances would be valuable in ethnology, and give us an insight into the character of different races.

An account of a sun dance is given in the journal of Sioux City, Iowa. About 4,000 men and women took part in it. It had something to do with the solemn piercing of children's ears, and lasted several days. Some of the dancers went through horrible mutilations and suffering. Blankets, looking-glasses, and eagles' feathers played a prominent part in the show, and almost all the dancers were on horseback. An Afghan dance, of a circular kind, may be included in the

sun dances. It resembles somewhat the Gipsy dance of Scotland, which, however, has no known connection with the sun myth. Twenty to forty wild Afghans, while shouting and clapping their hands and snapping their fingers, move in a circle round a musician.

Sword dances are numerous, and have probably a religious origin like the sword and spear dance of Europe ; and whenever man has been dependent on his weapons for his very life, he has worshipped these weapons.

It has been much disputed whether in early races men dance



Afghan National Dance

more than women, or whether promiscuous dancing is frequent. After studying the dance customs of many nations I come to the conclusion that women dance quite as much as men, but that promiscuous dancing, though by no means rare, is yet not so common as it is with us. A large share of the dances being the initiation of lads into manhood, women naturally do not participate in them. There are races of which the woman may not see a mystery dance under penalty of death ; even the accompanying instrument is so strongly tabooed that a woman may not see it. Again, there are dances belonging exclusively

to women, which no man may see. 'Begging dances,' as performed in Dakota, only belong to women ; but generally the women dance at the same time as the men, if not with them, and in most cases they perform the musical accompaniment, be it a song, or the beating of an opossum skin, or the shaking of a rattle. I have said before that the male dancer comes out in his most brilliant attire, and this may have originated in the



African Dance of Man and Woman with Sword and Spear

wish to induce selection from the women. It is also probable that he who dances best is also he who hunts and fights best. What is certain is that many marriages are arranged in the dance gatherings, so many that the pale, listless English mother who drags her daughters wearily from ball to ball through season after season in the fruitless search after a son-in-law would become still paler with envy could she realise how easily the same object is attained in the backwoods.

The Potlachs are festivals of the North-west tribes of Canada, in which blankets and dances play a prominent part. A chief will indifferently make a gift of blankets or of a new dance to a friendly chief; or he will give one, two, or three dances to his future son-in-law, in the guise of a dowry for his daughter.

Wedding dances are very numerous, and occasionally licentious. Those of Tahiti are especially pretty, as shown by the illustration.

It may be mentioned here, in connection with the domestic aspect of the savage dance, that when a Kaffir negro is unable to keep his wives in order, a dancing festival is held to settle the quarrel, and all the inhabitants of the village join in it. At midnight there is a sudden and great silence made, during which Mumbo Jumbo appears armed with a huge club. And that is the end of the festival, and, no doubt, of the domestic rebellion. Sanders says that the nightly moon dances in Africa are 'the most beautiful, most harmless, and most peaceful of pleasures possible.'

Mere trials of skill are allied to the domestic dances. The Kukri dance of the hill station near Assam is a very difficult performance. Bottles are used instead of Kukris until proficiency is attained. The dancer has to turn round and round as the knives swing in the circle; he must raise his right arm and left leg, and *vice versâ*, to allow the cords to pass underneath.

In some countries—for instance, in Dahomey—the king or highest dignitary of state will perform a *pas seul* in honour of a distinguished visitor, who, if he receives an invitation to join in it, must look upon it as a very high mark of favour. Travellers are often astonished at the grave countenances of the savage dancers, and believe that they have no pleasure in their performance. But that is quite a mistake. Thackeray referred to the sad faces of the Irish country people when going through the diversion of the jig. This grave appearance is chiefly due to a power of mimicry—a power which primitive

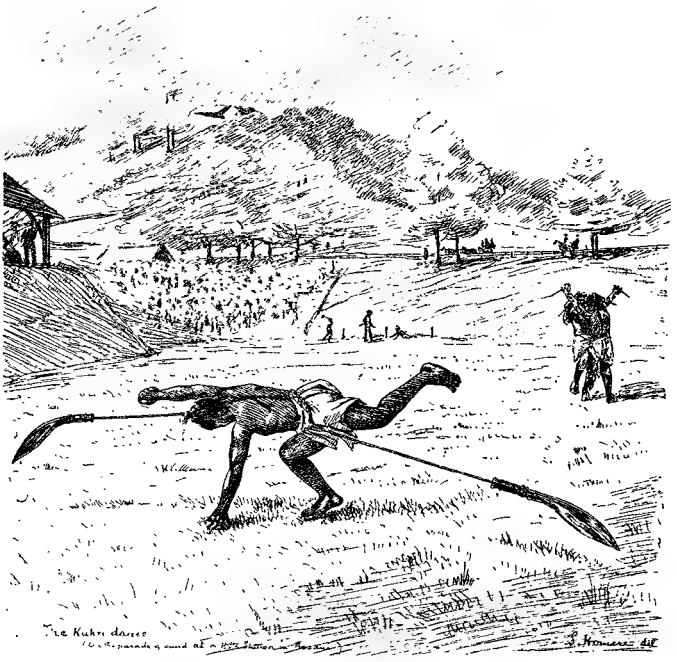


TAHITIAN DANCE

man possesses to a large extent ; indeed, his sense of imitation is often so great that it becomes endemic. Musters, Yagor, and others have remarked upon it.

I will conclude this chapter by three examples of savage dances, taken in three different parts of the world.

Burchell describes the dance of the Bushman, who per-



The Kukri Dance at Assam

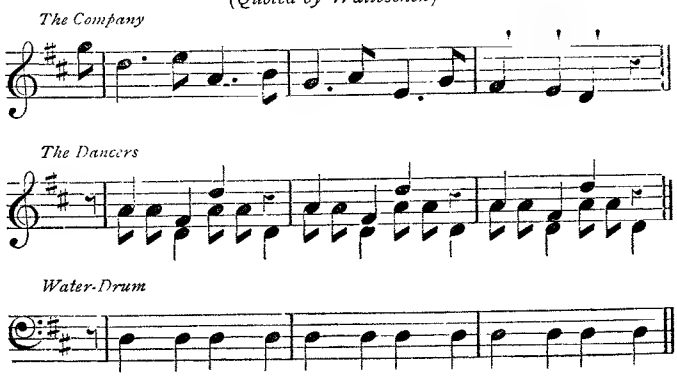
forms it at night in his hut, which is so crowded by people of both sexes that the dancer has only just room enough to stand. Near the entrance of the hut is a large clear fire. The dancer enters gradually in such a condition of vivaciousness and self-satisfaction that he sees nothing around him and only thinks of himself. As in the largest hut a grown-up person cannot stand upright, the dancer rests on two sticks, which he holds in his

hand, putting them on the ground at such angles as he thinks proper. In consequence his body is in a bent and most unnatural position, very unfit for a dance. His limbs are not hampered with clothes, as he only wears the shakal. Thus he dances without interruption. Each member of the assembly can dance in his turn and as long as he pleases, there being one set of clappers used in the performance, which are worn round the ankles and handed from one dancer to the other. The dancer moves on one spot, and, as his arms are needed to prop up his body, they can make but few movements. He sings ceaselessly and always keeps time. Even when he falls to the ground in a state of exhaustion he continues his chant and wriggles his body to the rhythm, then jumps up again and dances with renewed vigour.

The audience accompanies the dance with song and water-drum.

THE DANCE OF THE BUSHMEN

(*Quoted by Wallaschek*)



The *Korroborae*, also spelt Corroberee, &c. &c., has been written about by many travellers, and there are many conflicting reports about it. I will quote here Mr. James Dawson's account, as I believe it to be a most faithful one:

The korroborae consists of music, dancing, and acting. When

a korroborae is held all are dressed in their best attire. The chiefs are painted red over and under the eyes and on the cheeks ; . . . in the hair are fastened several incisor teeth of the large kangaroo, and the tail of a wild dog hangs from the hair down the back. . . . Both chiefs and common men wear necklaces usually formed of from eighty to a hundred kangaroo teeth tied by their roots to a skin cord. The usual apron is worn. The women wear the usual opossum rug ; a few kangaroo teeth are fastened among their back hair. . . . A short piece of reed is worn in the cartilage of the nose, and flowers in the slits of the ears. They also wear reed or kangaroo teeth necklaces and anklets of green leaves. The wives of chiefs are distinguished by two red stripes across the cheeks. Both men and women are ornamented by cicatrices—which are made when they come of age—on the chest, back, and upper part of the arms, but never on neck or face.

Before the korroborae commences—which is immediately after sunset—large quantities of dry bark, branches, and leaves are collected, and the young people are ordered to light the fire and attend to it. The men and well-grown boys retire to prepare themselves for the dance.

They paint their bodies and limbs with white stripes in such a manner as to give them the appearance of human skeletons ; and they tie round their ankles a number of leafy twigs which touch the ground and make a rustling noise as they move. Each dancer wears the reed ornament in his nose. When they stand in a row these reeds have the appearance of a continuous line.

The women do not join in the dance, but sit in half-circle behind the fire and sing, accompanying their song with the sound of beating on the opossum rugs. Some of the men stand beside the fire, beating time with music sticks. After the music has begun one of the dancers emerges from the darkness into the open ground so as just to be seen, and with a stamp sets himself with arms extended and legs wide apart and quivering, his feet shuffling in time to the music, and the twigs round his ankles rustling at each movement. He remains thus for a few seconds, and, turning round suddenly, disappears in the darkness with a rustling sound. Another dancer takes his place and goes through the same movements and disappears in the same way. . . . At length all the dancers are seen in a row, quivering and making a great rustling in time to the music, and advancing nearer and nearer to the fire until they come quite close, when a simultaneous loud groan is suddenly given, and the dance is over. The bright light of the fire shining on the white

stripes of the dancers, against a pitch-dark background, produces a very striking effect. The different tribes dance by turns; they never mingle.

Mr. James Dawson deplores the repression of the *Korroborae* by the Government officials, and, 'as little or nothing in the form of amusement is substituted, the weary monotony, restraint, and discipline of these tutelary establishments have a very depressing effect on the minds and health of the natives, and impel them to seek relief in the indulgence of intoxicating drinks, and who can blame them?'

A third example comes from Herman Melville's account of a scene in the Marquesas :—

The young girls very often danced by moonlight in front of their dwellings. There are a great variety of these dances, in which, however, I never saw the men take part. They all consist of active, romping, mischievous evolutions, in which every limb is brought into requisition. Indeed, the Marquesan girls dance all over, as it were; not only do their feet dance, but their arms, hands, fingers —ay, their very eyes seem to dance in their heads. The damsels wear nothing but flowers, and their compendious gala tunics; and when they plume themselves for the dance, they look like a band of olive-coloured sylphides on the point of taking wing.

CHAPTER IV

THE RITUAL DANCE

THE above title may appear incongruous to many, but before I attempt to carry the reader further into this subject I wish to ask him to try to liberate himself from prejudices, individual or national, and to permit me to lead his thoughts into a channel which may be new to him. I will not argue whether the dance is useful as an element of worship or not. I will merely endeavour to show that it has been an accessory to religious rites from time immemorial, and that in our own days, and even in Europe, ritual dances still exist.

In the chapter devoted to the dances of savages, I have said that, in my opinion, all their dances were connected with their religion. It is, therefore, unnecessary to refer to them any further; this chapter will only deal with the ritual dances of civilised peoples.

The Egyptians danced in the temples and on the banks of the Nile as an act of homage to their deities. All the Greek dances were probably once part of a religious ceremony, which went from the temple to the theatre, and from there into private life. Professor Blackie remarks: 'How hard it must be for a modern Presbyterian Christian to recognise in the twinkling-footed celerity of the merry dance an exercise which a pious old Dorian could look upon as an act of public worship!' Some of the Greek philosophers tried to explain the origin of the sacred dances by their conception of the deity which they considered as the Harmony of the world, and they thought the deity was best honoured by a mimic representation of the concord of its perfections expressing itself in the choral dance.

Ancient Rome had its Salii, priests whose mission it was to lead the festal dance. The Hebrews went, as we know, through solemn rhythmic evolutions in the temple, in the vineyards and in the fields. David's dance was a ritual dance, and it is best described by Dante. Rossetti's translation runs :

> There went before the consecrated chest
> The humble Psalmist, leaping as he danced,
> And at that time was less and more than king.

At the Jewish Easter festival the great Hallelujah was sung by a chorus moving in rhythm. The Essaer, a Jewish sect, formed two choruses, one of men and one of women, and sang hymns of praise, accompanying them with slow dance movements, and finally uniting in one chorus in memory of Miriam's dance. The Rabbinic books refer several times to the Creator dancing as a token of joy after He had made man. Luther also, translating Psalm cxviii. 27, compares the poplar boughs to the birches we set up at Whitsuntide as may-trees, round which the May or Whitsun dance is performed. (Delitzsch).

There was formerly no ritual without a dance, for there was no ritual without music, and the two arts were once inseparable. We, who repudiate the thought of the dance as an expression of devotional feeling, still keep music as an accessory of the cult ; and only a few nations, in whom some mystic element has remained, cling to the time-honoured custom of the pious dance.

The dance was once regarded as an outward sign, as a symbolic manifestation of humility, and as an expression of joyous gratitude. It is thus that the early Christians interpreted the dance. Gregory, bishop of Neocæsarea, states that St. Paul called the dance useful in the ritual. In the 'Acta Joannis,' an apocryphal romance, written by a person who calls himself Leucius and represents himself as a disciple of St. John, the Apostle is made to say that after the Last Supper our Lord called the Apostles to join hands and dance round Him while a hymn was sung. This is not incompatible with the Jewish customs, and would probably represent a form of thanksgiving.

The choral dance of the Essaer, already mentioned, was held after supper, and was no doubt a form of grace.

It is probable that, in spite of St. Basil's recommendation to the faithful, urging them to practise the dance as much as possible upon earth, because it is the principal occupation of



Miriam's Dance
(*From an Engraving after William Hensel*)

the angels in heaven, there was not much dancing in the very early Christian Church. The religious ceremonies had to be held in silence, in the catacombs, or in small private halls; and it is unlikely that the dance took any great share in the ritual until Christendom triumphed, and till its solemnities were held openly and with fitting splendour and pomp. Then

dances formed a part of the public worship. In the early churches the choir was raised like a theatre and separated from the altar. According to Scaliger, the first bishops were called Præsuls, and they led the sacred dance on solemn occasions round the altars. At St. Clement's and at St. Pancras in Rome such altars are to be seen to this day. These devotional dances were performed on feast days, later on every Sunday; and it is thought that the high dignitaries of the Church led the throng, in order to keep the ceremony decorous and to invest it with dignity by their presence. Theodosius says that at Antioch the Christians not only danced in the church, but also before the tombs of the martyrs.

That these customs were really current we know from evidence; each feast day had its appropriate hymn *and dance*. On the vigils of saints' days the worshippers met at the church doors, and sang and danced in the churchyard as people can still be seen to dance in Greece.

When speaking generally of the religious dances of the Christian Church, we must picture to ourselves solemn movements with beautiful figures and symbolic attitudes, accompanied by hymns. The church dance was never a mixed dance, but every sex formed its own chorus. The reverse would have been impossible, as women occupied a separate part of the church, and were quite divided from men by gratings such as are found in convents.

Little by little the dances degenerated; just as the grand Dionysiac chorus became the 'impious dinos,' so the early Christian festivals became extravagant and mixed with touches of barbarism and paganism. We know most about these practices from the edicts against them. The Council of 692 expressly forbade dancing in churches and graveyards. But in the thirteenth century dancing, together with music and poetry, was once more allowed in the very sanctuary by the introduction of the mystery plays. They were dramatic representations of Biblical scenes, first performed by priests and acolytes, later also by laymen. In some cases an awning was spread in front of the

church, and the protected place was called Ballatoria, or Choraria (dancing floor). At Cologne the Bishop forbade such a play in 1617, which proves how late the practice was kept up.

In mediæval times the theatre, as a building, was unknown, and the general meeting-place for relaxation or for devotion was the church and its surrounding graveyard.

It would be difficult to realise the scenes which occurred in connection with these ceremonies unless we realised at the same time the ignorance and the barbarism of the period preceding the Renaissance, a period when devotion and license were strangely combined in the same people. Some of the functions, no doubt, were a survival of paganism. St. Augustine had already called the dance a pagan custom. He says : 'The Christians have kept pagan customs, among others that of dancing and singing on feast days.' Yet that it once was a ritual we know from St. Chrysostom, who excused himself from joining the festal dance on the score of illness.

The English bishop Meletius, advised by Pope Gregory I., allowed the dance in the Church up to 604; and the practice went from Britain into Germany, together with the introduction of the Gospel, which was mainly due to Britain. We may assume that these customs remained unprohibited for five or six hundred years; after that edicts were issued by Council after Council, but without in the least causing a cessation of the practices. France is the country from which we have the greatest amount of details concerning Church dances, partly because they survived longest in Gaul and in France, and partly because a very interesting book written by the Père Ménestrier furnishes us with ample details. This book was written in 1683, and the author tells us that he has himself seen in the churches of Paris the senior canon leading the choir-boys in a circular dance while singing hymns of praise. The practice was certainly allowed by the Fathers; for we can read in the Liturgy of Paris : 'Le chanoine ballera au premier psaume.' This dignified and gentle moving in rhythm to the song was not in any way reprehensible, and the edicts forbidding dancing

in churches chiefly fell against mixed dances or licentious mystery plays, also called 'soties' or 'moralités.' At Limoges on Christmas Day after vespers the deacons danced in the church, singing an anthem to St. Etienne ; the priests danced on St. John's Day in honour of the saint, and the minor clergy danced on Epiphany Day. Beletus ('Libr. de Divin. Offic.'), twelfth century, mentions all these dances, and adds that a festival called 'Festum Asinorum' was held in the churches of Sens and of Rouen.





In a Latin manuscript of the sixteenth century an account is given of ball-playing in the church of Sens. It was the

duty of the minor canon of Sens to provide a ball and to present it to the highest Church dignitary present, who tossed it to one of the senior canons. A dance would then be performed by canons, priests, and deacons, singing the prose 'Victimæ Paschali laudes,' to the accompaniment of the organ. Proof of this practice is furnished by a regulation of the Chapter of Auxerre, dated April 18, 1396, called 'Ordinatio de pila facienda,' and by another of April 19, 1412, reducing the size of the ball; yet it must still have been a large one, for it could not be held in one hand.

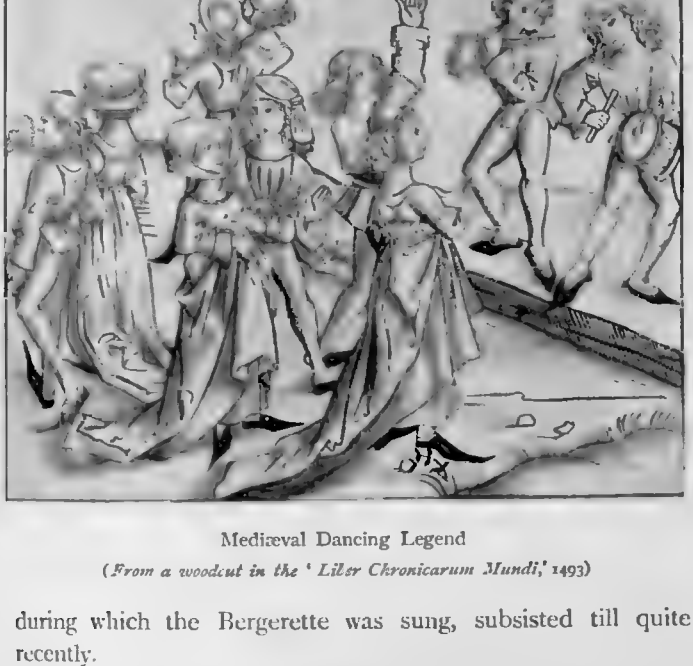
At Besançon an ecclesiastic dance took place on Easter Day up to 1738. This was an expression of happiness and of gratitude, and the clergy founded the ceremony on the Biblical dances of rejoicing. In the church of Mary Magdalene at Besançon was held a dance called Bergerette. The tune has been preserved in a MS. of Hughes de Vilete.

BERGERETTE



Fidelium sonet vox sobria,
Convertere Sion in gaudia,
Sit omnium una lætitia
Quos unica redemit gratia.

Châlons and Aix-en-Provence also had such customs, and at Limoges on the day of St. Martial at the end of each psalm, instead of 'Gloria Patri,' the people sang in their *patois* : 'Saint Marceau, pregas per nous et nous epingaren per bous' ('St. Martial, pray for us ; and we will dance for you'). In 1738 this was forbidden, but a solemn procession round the cloisters,



Mediæval Dancing Legend

(*From a woodcut in the 'Liber Chronicarum Mundi,'* 1493)

during which the Bergerette was sung, subsisted till quite recently.

In mediæval times dancing developed into a sort of passion among all classes. The Nuremberg 'Chronicle,' 1493, has a curious legend, which portrays the true spirit of the period. The print here given represents some young people of Saxony dancing in the churchyard of St. Magnus. There were fifteen youths and four maidens (wall-flowers cannot have

existed then), and they danced so much and sang so loudly that they disturbed the priest, who was saying mass. He left the chapel and came out to them, asking them to desist; but, heedless of his injunction, they continued their sport. The priest then prayed to God and to St. Magnus to make them dance for a whole year as a punishment. The writer, who styles himself Othbert the Sinner, says that a girl's arm came off in the hand of her partner, but she danced on; that they felt neither rain, nor cold, nor heat, nor hunger, thirst, or fatigue; their shoes and their clothes wore out, but they danced on. They trod down the ground to such an extent that they made a deep hole in it, but they danced on; and only at the end of a year did their release come.

Much has been written about the mediæval dancing mania, which has inspired poets and has puzzled scientists. The rage became endemic, and in 1374 the number of sufferers from the St. Vitus's dance became enormous. In France it was called 'Danse de St. Guy,' and in Germany it took the name of 'Veith.' In Lorraine it was called 'La Danse de St. Jean.' The Rev. John Morris quotes the following quaint poem which describes it:

I

L'an treize cens soixante et quatorze,
A Metz advint piteuse chose,
Qu'en la cité, ville et champs,
Gens danssoient du bien St. Jean.

II

C'estoit une pitié admirable,
A merveille très-pitoyable,
Car tous les plus réconfortés
Estoient fort épouvantés.

III

Fut en dormant, fut en veillant,
Fut sur poure, ou sur vaillant,
Onque la fortune tomboit,
Tantost danser les convenoit,

IV

Le Prestre en faisant son office,
Les Seigneurs séans en justice,
Le laboureur en son labeur,
Sur qui que tomboit la douleur.

V

Et danssoient neuf ou dix jours,
Sans avoir repos ny séjour,
Ou plus ou moins à l'adventure,
Comme est le mal aux créatures.

VI

Ils danssoient en Sainct Jean en chambre,
L'un l'autre ne pouvoit attendre ;
De la cité y eut des danssants,
Que grans que petis, bien quinze cens.

This account has its importance, for it is possible that in the dancing disease we may find the root-idea of the several dancing processions of the Catholic Church. It seems likely that, in order to free themselves from their affliction, the sufferers may have undertaken a pilgrimage to some saint, and that afterwards the ceremony was kept up in token of gratitude and of joy at emancipation from the evil.

In the Ardennes there is every year to this day the dancing procession of Echternach. It is in honour of an English saint, St. Willibrord, who was the apostle of Friesland, Denmark, and Luxemburg, and who lived about 690. His favourite foundation was the monastery of Echternach, near the little town of the same name, surrounded by wooded hills. St. Willibrord was specially famous for his miraculous curing of nervous diseases, and in 1892 the procession counted 14,000 people. At various times it has been prohibited ; in 1777 the Archbishop of Trèves forbade it, but subsequently withdrew the restriction. During the French Revolution it was stopped, but in 1814 ten thousand dancers again went, dancing to the shrine at Echternach.

'Up to the seventeenth century the dance was often obligatory in many lands. It was, as I say in my chapter on French Dances, a feudal *hansel*, and the prince-bishops probably also demanded this act of servitude. At stated times every house had to send one man to the dance with an offering of money; but this offering was slight in comparison to the usual tolls, and therefore the dance assumed the form of a tribute of gratitude. Dr. Auguste Neyen thinks that 'the tribute imposed by a Churchman, who was also the sovereign, would have to be paid at the shrine of the saint, and that the taste of the times carried the dance into the church and around the altar.' The Rev. John Morris says that

In 1506, when Erard de la Marck was made Prince-Bishop of Liège, he found the Verviétois had neglected their procession for thirty or forty years. He announced to them that they must either pay or play; and, as paying meant a tax or octroi, they preferred to revive the procession. The Prince-Bishop is reported to have imposed on them as a penance that they should dance with the left thumb turned to the spectators and, we are told when, through fatigue, they dropped their thumb, all the bystanders cried out in Liège *patois*, 'L'pôse à haut!' ('Thumb up!'), which phrase has become proverbial at Liège for being hard pressed.

Another suggestion as to the origin of the Echternach procession may be found in the form of a penitential vow. The sufferers were told that in order to make the pilgrimage with success they would have to walk back one step out of every three. When large numbers of pilgrims assembled, it became necessary to keep time in this extraordinary mode of progression, and a tune was played to which a dancing step was adapted. At present the 'Jumping Saints' ('Les Saints dansants'), coming from Luxemburg, Belgium, France, and Prussia, begin their pilgrimage on Whit Tuesday on the banks of the Sûre, the river which divides Luxemburg from Prussia. The leaders are the villagers from Prüm, who have to journey about thirty-six miles before they can reach the Sûre. They start from Prüm on Sunday, and travel singing and praying till

they arrive at the frontier. On Whit Tuesday a short sermon opens the ceremony; it is delivered from a temporary pulpit erected by the river-side. The priests in cottas head the procession, then come the musicians, finally the dancers. The melody is traditional, like the dance:

(*By kind permission of John Gerard, editor of the 'Month'*)



Of this immense band each set of eight pilgrims travels abreast, holding handkerchiefs or sticks as they move, so as to keep time, and it takes them four hours to dance the distance of 1,500 mètres; the regulation step being more gliding than springing, and the whole effect grave, serious, and suited to a religious dance. Up to the seventeenth century no women took a share in the pilgrimage; now men and women dance apart, children follow the band of their own village, and they often appear so little tired with their four hours' dancing that they frequently double them, for no sooner have they reached the church than they run back to the end of the procession and begin again! The procession mounts the flight of sixty-two steps of the church without interrupting the dance; then they enter the door of the left aisle, turn round the altar in the choir, and go out by the right aisle. Not for an instant does the dance stop; the musicians go on playing their wild melody, the old Roman arches seem to quiver with the thrill of the thousands of measured steps, and the ranks are

unbroken till the pilgrims reach a great wooden cross in the court outside the church ; not till then is their vow accomplished. I have given part of this account almost in the very words of a writer in 'The Month,' who frequently quotes M. Kurth. The latter says of the Echternach procession : 'It is not an act of worship, neither is it a mere common institution ; it occupies that borderland where the Christian Church stoops down with a smile to the people, and holds out her hand to aid their steps in the rough roads of life. It is not a thing that can be imitated or transported elsewhere.'

It may be surprising that so little has been written concerning this strange survival of a time of simple faith and of religious spirit ; but these dances were once quite common in Catholic lands, and people did not think of noting down every-day events. At Seville, the dance of Los Seises is performed to this day on Corpus Christi and the Immaculate Conception, during the octaves of the two feasts, and on the three days of carnival. This dance is performed by twelve choir-boys in two divisions of six, hence Los Seises (the Sixes). The function takes place about vesper-time in presence of the Cardinal Archbishop in full canonicals and the cathedral clergy in front of the high altar, which is brilliantly lighted by thousands of candles. Boys of about twelve or thirteen dance before the Holy Sacrament, castanet in hand, and wear a quaint mediæval dress, blue for the feasts of the Virgin, and red for Corpus. The dance belongs to the Musarabic rite, and was introduced by Cardinal Ximenes in Toledo as also in Seville. At various times an effort has been made to stop the practice, but it has survived to this day, and every eye-witness acknowledges that the effect produced by the dance is highly reverent and poetic. It is forbidden to print the music, which is very beautiful. I am indebted for the accompanying musical example (p. 108) to the kindness of some nuns of Seville who have been so good as to note it down for me.

The steps of this dance are not unlike those of the minuet. The castanets are of ivory, the shoes and stockings worn

by the Seises are white. The clergy kneel during the whole dance, and, as can be seen from the copy of Gustave Doré's drawing, the congregation watch the performance with deep



El Baile de los Seises in the Cathedral of Seville before the Holy Sacrament. (After Gustave Doré)

(By permission of Messrs. Sampson Low, Marston & Co.)

fervour, fully impressed by its grand solemnity. It is only natural that, of all the religious dances, the most beautiful

should have survived in Spain ; for, of all countries of Europe, Spain is that upon which the Catholic religion has made the strongest impression, and the idea of a dance as a translation of devotional sentiment is perfectly congruous in a land where reverence for all that is holy has permeated every class of society.

BAILE DE LOS SEISES

Introduccion



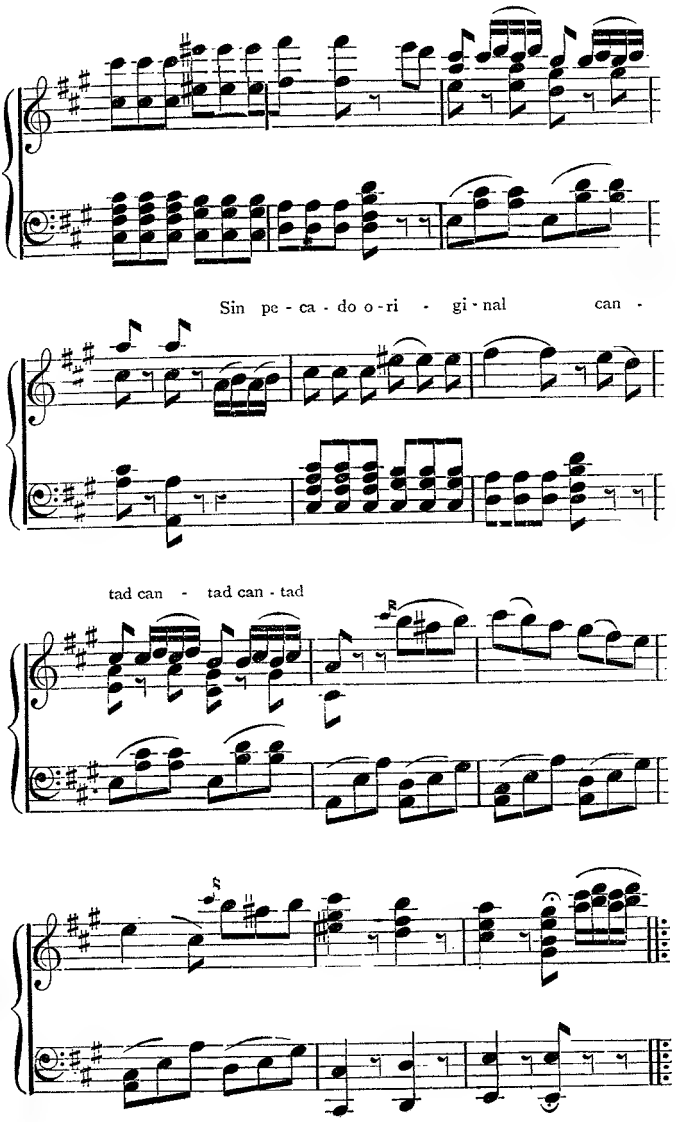

Salve, O Virgen más pura y más be - lla, que la Au-
rora y que el as - tro del di - - - - a! Hija y madre y es - po - sa Ma-
ri - - - - a, y la puer - ta de Di-os O - ri - en - tal! Salve, O
Vir-gen! Sal-ve, O Vir-gen!
Salve, O Virgen! Salve, O Virgen!

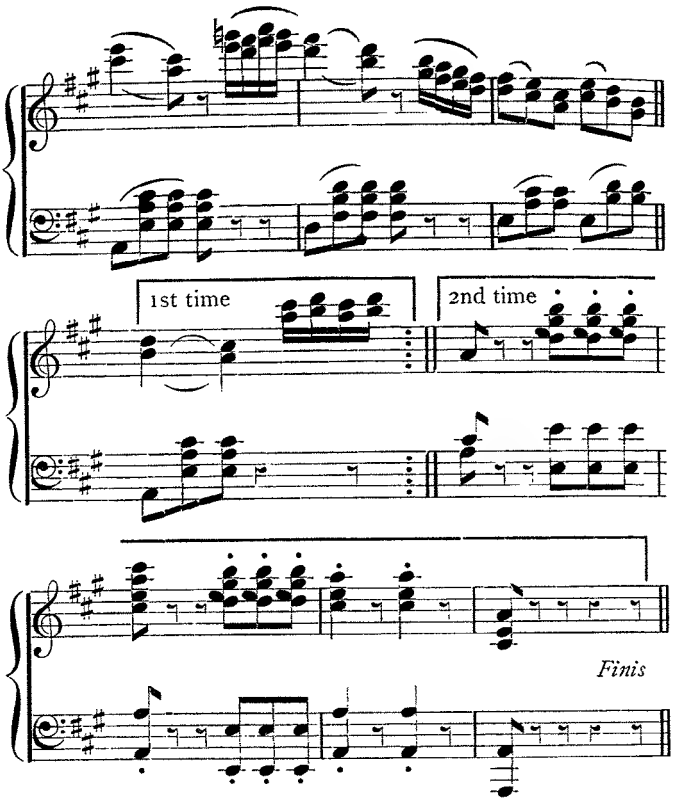

Hija y Madre y es-posa tu Ma - ri - - a, y las
puer - tas de Dios Ori - en - tal! Salve, O Vir - gen! Salve, O
Virgen!
V.S. al Estrivillo

ESTRIVILLO




gi - - da, Com-pañ-er-os, can-tad, y de Espa-ña Pa-tro-na Re-
al.
Dolce
Com-pa - ñe-ros, can-tad con-ce-
bi - da sin pe - ca - do o - ri-gi - nal.

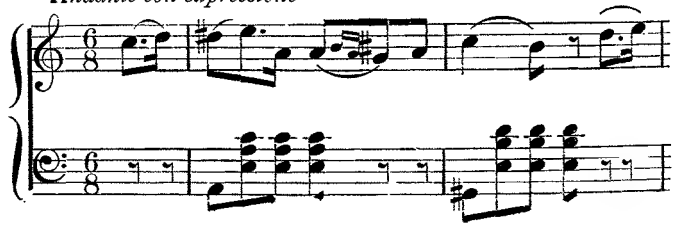

Sin pe - ca - do o - ri - gi - nal can -
tad can - tad can - tad



Repeat the Estrivillo for another verse, and then V.S. to Coplas.

COPLAS

Andante con expressione




Nor-te
fijo en el mar pro-ce-lo - so, nos li - ber ta del du - ro nau-
fra - gio. Ar-ca san-ta que fuis - te pre-sa - - - gio de sa -


lud y de vida al mor-tal. Porque á ti ni el sil-bido es-pan-
to - - so del so-berbio aqui - lon se re-sis - - te, ni del
Co-ci-to im-puro a-cre - cis - te ni un mo-men-to en su inmundo rau-
dal. Ral - len - tan - do

The same feeling will move the Spaniard to dance a Jota before a corpse, if it be that of a young and innocent being. He will rejoice that the child has been saved from the troubles of this life and from sin ; he believes firmly that it now has

joined the chorus of dancing angels, and therefore, in front of the very bier, in the presence of the sorrowing mother, he will click his castanets and go through the evolutions of the Jota with the same simplicity and the same devotion as he will tell his beads.

Perhaps a similar idea prompts the women of Saharanpur, in Northern India, to sing and dance joyously after the death of a man of great age. In this case the joy might be caused



A Funeral Jota. (After Gustave Doré)
(*From Ch. Davillier's 'Spain,' by permission of Messrs. Bickers & Son*)

at the release from infirmity of the old man in his second childhood.

Funeral dances are a widespread custom, and the Irish wakes enter into this category. I have seen also many funeral dances performed in South America by Catholics after the death of a child or of a young girl. At Bailleul, in Flanders, a song and dance are given by the companions of a girl after her remains have been carried to the cemetery. The survivors take the winding-sheet and move it in rhythmic fashion, singing the accompanying song. This custom dates back to

Charlemagne, who, however, censured the habit of dancing in graveyards. There are instances of many church dances in Mexico and in other lands formerly colonised by Spaniards. Where the Catholic missionaries have encountered pagan dancing rites, they have often wisely transformed them into Christian ceremonies instead of prohibiting them altogether. I saw a very curious dance in the mining districts of Chili. It is called El Baile de Pifano, and takes place among the working men during the month consecrated to the Virgin. They wear extraordinary hats surmounted by three looking-glasses, one above the other, and ornamented with tinsel shavings of many hues, the whole being overtopped by a cardboard picture of the Virgin. They are clad in a white smock not unlike a surplice, and one of them is dressed all in red and called El Diablo. They dance round him in a bent position, shuffling their feet, their chest nearly touching their knees, and thus doubled up they go from cross to cross, and from altar to altar, continuing for hours and hours. The musical accompaniment consists of a sound with a primitive wooden instrument partly filled with water and producing only one note.

Other continents have also religious dances. Mr. Theodore Bent relates that in the Abyssinian Church they have sacred dances, supposed by the Ethiopians to have been derived from David; but Mr. Bent believes, and I believe it with him, that they have been handed down from pagan times, and that 'the excuse of David has been invented to maintain this favourite and really graceful form of worship amongst them.' These dances reminded the traveller of the choral worship of Dionysius.

The cross and the brass basin have taken the place of the altar, the frankincense is there, and the singing and chanting are carried on in the form of a dialogue, as if one priest was announcing to another some good news which prompted hilarity; the black-faced, bare-legged priests, with white turbans and red velvet cloaks, a sistrum in one hand and a crutch in the other, waved to and fro in the mazy dance, whilst boys beat the drums to regulate the time.

The figures seemed to us something between a minuet and a quadrille. . . . The capacity displayed by Ethiopian priests for dancing is unlimited. In their nightly services, at weddings and other festivities, the priests are prepared to dance with a vigour that would put to shame the most energetic performers in an English ball-room. The rattle or sistrum exactly corresponds to the ancient sistrum, also used in Rome, but more especially associated with Egypt, where it was used in the mystical music at the worship of Isis.

Egypt has mystical dances yet; the Dancing Dervishes, or



Dance of Howling Dervishes
(*From an Engraving after C. N. Cochin*, 1787)

followers of Mevelava, perform the exercises in honour of their founder, who himself is said to have pirouetted for four days and nights, without ceasing, in honour of Mahomet. The dances have so often been described by travellers that I will merely refer the reader to the works of Professor Flinders Petrie, Mrs. Murray-Aynsley, and others, who give also interesting accounts of dances, religious and secular, in other parts of the globe. The lady speaks of a religious dance in Algeria performed by the Aïssasoua (or followers of Jesus), executed

after the inhalation of some special fumes, which seem to bring the dancers to such a pitch of exaltation that they are enabled to 'eat scorpions, broken glass, and stand upon the blade of a naked sword.'

Returning to the religious dances of Europe, it is necessary to mention the Guglia di San Paolino, performed annually on June 26 in front of the cathedral and in the very sanctuary at Nola, near Naples. It is held in honour of San Paolino, who, when he returned from Barbary to Nola, was greeted by the

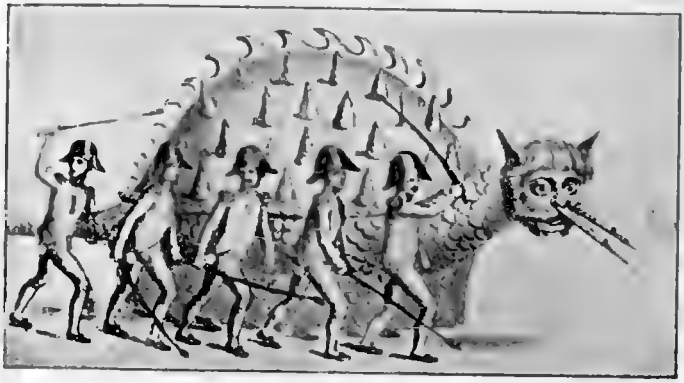


Dance of Turning Dervishes
(*From an Engraving after C. N. Cochin*, 1787)

citizens with a dancing procession. This custom of honouring a traveller, especially a saint, with a welcoming dance must have existed pretty widely. In England, for instance, when St. Aldhelm, abbot of Malmesbury, returned from Rome, the lay people 'with their feet praised him with dances.' La Tarasque is a dance of the Rhône country, held on Whit Monday and on St. Martha's Day, in grateful remembrance of the delivery from a monster which ravaged the shores of the Rhone and was subjugated by St. Martha. An effigy of the

monster is carried through the town by young men in a special costume, and some mimic movements are performed.

Prætorius describes ghost dances and ghoul dances, which were symbolic of the unrest of the departed sinners ; and this brings us to witch dances, which have played such a prominent part in poetry, drama, and opera, from the witches in *Macbeth* downwards. Lanner has composed a witches' waltz, and Goethe's 'Walpurgis Nacht' has inspired Gounod. In reality the witch dances are an offspring of the ancient pagan ritual dances. They were so essentially a feature of Celtic



La Tarasque

and German cults, and had such a hold on popular beliefs, that when the edicts came against dances the peasant, still superstitious, as he is even to-day, changed the pagan deities into gnomes, ghosts, and witches, who had their own dances. Everyone has heard that at their nightly meetings the witches disport themselves with music and dancing, and that above all, on the Brocken, they and imps whirl around to uncanny music played by fiddlers on horses' skulls over which catgut has been stretched, and that this is called the Walpurgis Night.

Who was Walpurga ? A saintly nun of England whose feast day fell on May 1 (May-day), the great spring day, and the

great day of popular gatherings. The coincidence of the night preceding the festival with the vigil of the saint who had gone over to Germany to perform many miracles gave the night its name. People went out with torches and with holy branches, stables were guaranteed with a cross, and St. Walpurga was invoked for protection against the evil spirits.

ANCIENT DANISH WALPURGIS DANCE

(From Boehme, by permission of Messrs. Breitkopf & Härtel, Leipzig)



Another famous dancing occasion is the Eve of St. John when in so many parts of Europe, even in this nineteenth century, dances are held round fires and through fires. This day was

connected with numerous ancient beliefs and superstitions, and it is probable that in mediæval times the dances through fires — such as are still performed by maids of Bretagne, Portugal, Germany, &c.—originated in the old trial by fire, which was formerly believed to rest on the direct intervention of Providence. Yet they may have a still more ancient origin —in fire-worship.

To me, who have tried to study the history of the dance in all its aspects, it seems extraordinary that it should be looked upon by so many people in the present day as incompatible with reverence and piety, for in the early account of most civilised nations we can find the dance combined with music and with song as a leading element of the religious rites.

CHAPTER V

ENGLISH DANCES

We are sometimes apt to think that dancing—spontaneous dancing, dancing from pure lightness of heart on all occasions of festivity, such as we see among the people of certain other nations—is foreign to our clime and race. We are said to be a phlegmatic people, not given to any violent display of our feelings, and very sparing always in the use of gesture. We are self-contained and self-conscious to a degree, and are astonished, not to say scandalised, at the sight of a Sicilian expressing every feeling as it passes over him by vigorous gesticulation, varied often by laughter and tears. These things are not natural to such a sober and serious-minded nation, and we speak of a 'French dancing-master' in a tone of pitying superiority; while, if you go into an English ball-room, you will find little that is distinctively English, most modern dances, such as the waltz or polka, having been imported from abroad. But there is no nation, however staid, which does not possess some really national dances, and to discover these in England we must go back to early times—to dances which have long ago disappeared from our English ball-rooms—or we must penetrate into our country districts, where we shall find our native dances still surviving; or indeed we may meet with a revival of them, introduced to grace some village festival or country 'merry night.' One dance indeed we have which is called our national dance *par excellence*—namely, the Hornpipe; and, as we are a nation of sailors, it is but right and proper that this should be the sailor's dance, and should most fittingly be per-

formed in sailor's dress. It is said that Captain Cook thought dancing was most useful to keep his men in good health during a voyage. When it was calm, and the sailors had consequently nothing to do, he made them dance usually the hornpipe—to the sound of a fiddle ; and to this he attributes much freedom from illness on his ship.

And this dance is really very characteristic of the English. The versatile and lively Italian accompanies his dancing with varied facial expression; the Englishman dances with a solemn countenance, as if he were engaged in some most serious business The Spaniard or Italian will gesticulate freely. and wave his tambourine or castanets ; the Englishman dances with his lower limbs only, keeping his arms usually in one position. In conversation we do not express our meaning by gesticulation. Why should we require it in our dancing? The dances of a country are not something extraneous to it ; they have grown up with the people, and possess their peculiarities, as a garment fits itself to the shape of the wearer.



Sailor's Hornpipe
(*From an Engraving after J. H. Ramberg, circa* 1800)

But dancing is by no means foreign to our English nature, and the courtiers of the sixteenth century were celebrated for it; in 1598 they were said indeed to excel in dancing and music. They had always loved the dance, but the fashion was perhaps set by the Queen, who was passionately fond of the Pavane. There is a legend that Elizabeth bestowed the office of Lord Chancellor on Sir Christopher Hatton, not for any surpassing knowledge of the law, but because

he wore green bows on his shoes and danced the pavane to perfection. No wonder her Court produced fine dancers as well as splendid statesmen and brave sailors!

Sir Christopher Hatton is mentioned in Gray's 'Long Story:'

> Full oft within the spacious walls,
> When he had fifty winters o'er him,
> My grave Lord Keeper led the brawls;
> The seals and maces danced before him.
>
> His bushy beard and shoe-strings green,
> His high-crown'd hat and satin doublet,
> Moved the stout heart of England's Queen,
> Tho' Pope and Spaniard could not trouble it.

The high spirits and great bodily health of the English make them naturally good dancers. Their dances are full of fun, and often resemble nothing so much as a good romp; their country-dances, from the Maypole revel to Sir Roger de Coverley, are gay, wholesome, and hearty, eminently characteristic of the people; but, while not wanting in grace, they are without that elegance and softness of movement which we associate with French or Spanish dancing. Much of this difference is due to difference in climate; with chilly springs, and summers which are uncertain, to say the least of them, England is not adapted to a great variety of outdoor dances. But the return of spring brings with it many tender memories; it is ushered in with many quaint and ancient customs, and so among the May-day festivities we find the dance taking a prominent place, just as in other lands June, bringing with it the Feast of St. John, is the month of dances.

Dancing has always been considered a necessary part of a gentlewoman's education. The 'Anatomy of Melancholy' even asserts that a young woman can dance and sing and play before she can repeat her Pater Noster or the Ten Commandments—that is, before marriage—for matrimony has such a sobering effect that one who before marriage has had infinite trouble and expense bestowed upon these accomplishments, will not so

much as look upon an instrument when she becomes a wife. Perhaps the maiden of whom Burton is thinking has not found that the realisation comes up to her expectation; or perhaps, when she has the actual fact, she no longer needs the 'representation of matrimony,' for such Sir Thomas Elyot styles the dance. 'It is diligently to be noted,' says this writer in his book called the 'Governor,' 'that the company of men and women in dancing, they both observing one number and time in their movings, was not begun without a special consideration for the conjunction of those two persons, as for the imitation of sundry vertues which be by them represented.' Of the opposite sex Burton says: 'If he is truly touched with the loadstone of love, he must learn to sing and dance and play upon some instrument, for, as Erasmus hath it, "Musicam docet amor et poesin."' Dancing would probably initiate the young lover into the mysteries of another art—namely, that of kissing—for it was customary to salute your partner at the beginning and end of each dance, and in some dances oftener. But, to be sure, such salutations were not thus limited, and took place on first meeting a fair friend in the morning or on taking leave of her at night; as Chaucer says, when the mistress of the house enters the room, he

> Riseth up full courtisly,
> And her embraceth in his armes narrow.

In fact, the custom was peculiarly English, until the Puritans, in their reaction against thoughtless frivolity, condemned all innocent amusement. The 'Histriomastix' denounces dancing in no measured terms: it 'serves no necessary use, no profitable, laudable, or pious end at all,' and it is fraught with terrible danger to Christian men. 'The way to heaven is too steep, too narrow, for men to dance in and to keep revel rout. No way is large or smooth enough for capering roisters, for jumping, skipping, dancing dames, but that broad, beaten, pleasant road that leads to Destruction.'

As dancing was a common and favourite occupation among

English ladies in the seventeenth century, let us see how far back we can trace the custom, and what remains, if any, are left of our oldest English dances. Little is known of the Anglo-Saxon dances, though it is said that dancing was in old times a favourite amusement of the women of all ranks ; gentle and simple, free and unfree, all claimed the right to disport themselves thus at times of merrymaking. The only historians of those times were the monks ; but they were the professed enemies of dancing, and so they naturally kept no chronicle of the dance, and we have to turn to other sources of information. From the Saxon words used to express dancing we may judge that the actions employed were somewhat different from the more graceful motions of modern times. *Hoppan*, to hop ; *saltian*, or *stellan*, to leap ; *tumbian*, to tumble : we get little idea of the mode of the dance from such words as these. Chaucer calls the dancers tumblesteres or saylors (from Latin *salio*), and they were also called sauters, from French *sauter*, to leap. Hence Piers Plowman : ' I can neither saylen ne saute.' But as in those days the arrival of the minstrel, as he travelled from hall to hall or from hut to hut, was eagerly looked for, seeing that from him news of all that was going on in the distant world might be obtained, so too we shall find some meagre records of the dance from accounts of the Saxon gleemen. Dance and song have always been closely wedded to one another, and the singers, who recited long tales of battle or of love to the thrumming of an old harp, were probably also dancers. Thus we find that in Ardgar's oration to Dunstan, the mimi, or minstrels, are said to ' fling and dance.' The Saxon gleeman's dances were varied ; for, as his audience extended from the thrall in his cottage up to the thane in his castle, so must his dances be made to please the vulgar and the mighty. Besides music and dancing, these minstrels performed a number of tricks and jokes of the rudest kind ; these were often called the glee-games, which are defined as ' merry tricks, jests, sports, and gambols.' [1] In this respect the gleemen re-

[1] Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes*.

sembled the Norman 'jongleurs,' and were employed by Anglo-Saxons of wealth to amuse an idle hour. This office of theirs may be compared to that of the fool or Court jester, so often met with in the literature of that and later times. Gaimar has preserved a curious Saxon story of the murder of King Edward by his stepmother in 978. The story runs that the wicked Queen procured the services of a dwarf, who, by his tricks and clever dancing, lured the young King alone to her abode.[1] Among other tricks, the jongleurs taught bears, monkeys, horses, and dogs to tumble and dance. A manuscript in the Bodleian refers to dancing bears in the fourteenth century.

The use of the Anglo-Saxon terms for leaping and tumbling to indicate the dance shows that the dances of the gleemen consisted largely of vaulting and tumbling. The village wakes in the North of England are still kept up under the title of 'The Hopping,' and *a hop* is common Lancashire for a dance.

To dance upon one foot was a favourite feat of the Saxon gleemen or Norman minstrels, and this was especially the accomplishment of women, who were called *hoppesteres*.

The Egg Dance was one which required wonderful skill in this direction; in fact, to be able to dance it was taken as a token of great agility. Thus one of the characters in the Elizabethan comedy, 'The Longer Thou Livest the more Fool Thou Art,' says: 'Upon my one foote I can hoppe and daunce it trimley about an eggc.' The dance as performed at Sadler's Wells was as follows: A number of eggs were placed at certain distances marked upon the stage; the dancer took his stand and was then blindfolded. When the music struck up a hornpipe he went through all the paces and figures of the dance, passing backwards and forwards between the eggs without touching them.[2] It is probable the main features of the gleemen's dance were similar to this, any steps being performed to any music at the will of the dancer; a harp was often the instrument, and we see also the horn and trumpet represented in old plates. The dances shown in one of Strutt's plates seem to be very

[1] T. Wright. [2] Strutt.

difficult, and to resemble in some respects the modern hornpipe; in this plate one dance is of a burlesque kind, intended to excite laughter by the absurdity of the gestures. The other represents a woman dancing with a bear; the dance is more elegant, and consists in the woman approaching and receding from the bear with great agility, so as to prevent his seizing upon her, which the animal seems to be desirous of doing, being unmuzzled and irritated by the scourge of the juggler.[1]



Tumblers and Jugglers
(*From Eccleston's 'English Antiquities,'* 1847)

Another feat of the gleemen was ball-playing, which consisted in throwing three balls and three knives alternately into the air, and catching them one by one as they fell, but returning them in regular rotation. This feat was generally done to music, usually that of an instrument of the viol kind.

If we advance from Saxon times to the early Middle Ages—by which we mean the ages after the Conquest—we may divide

[1] Strutt.

the usual dances into two kinds—(1) the dancing of the jongleurs or minstrels, (2) domestic dancing. Minstrel dancing continued as in the earlier period ; except that, naturally, as new elements of civilisation were introduced, and new ideas were imbibed from contact with other lands, the primitive dances were enlarged and altered. For instance, after the First Crusade, many Eastern practices were adopted ; amongst others, it is evident that the dances of Eastern dancing-girls—often, unfortunately, indecent—were brought westward. From Chaucer, too, we learn that our forefathers had their dancing-girls, as the men of the East had.

Perhaps the most important of the dances performed by 'minstrels, jogelours, and tumblers,' is the Carole, described with great minuteness by Chaucer in his 'Romaunt of the Rose.' He says of the Parish Clerk :

> In 20 manners he coude skip and daunce
> After the Schole of Oxenfordè tho',
> And with his leggès casten to and fro.

It is also one of the domestic dances, and was usually danced by ladies and gentlemen alternately, who held each other's hands, and danced in a circle. The name was originally given by the Trouvères to a dance in which the performers moved slowly in a circle, singing as they went ; the term first of all signified songs intermingled with dancing, in which sense it is used by Chaucer and other ancient writers.[1] The name was afterwards applied to festive songs, and, these being most prevalent at Christmas-time, it has for a long time past designated those sung at that feast. There is a distinct difference between Christmas hymns and Christmas carols, the former being of a much more solemn nature. Mr. Sandys says that it appears to have been formerly the custom in country churches in England for the worshippers on Christmas Day to dance after prayers, and to sing out, 'Yole, yole, yole.' Since our sacred feast of Christmas falls at the same time as the Yuletide of Northern nations, it has absorbed

[1] Sandys, *Christmas Carols.*

many customs and ceremonials from the heathen festival, which have therefore no Christian signification ; amongst others, decorating with holly and ivy, the use of mistletoe, the wassail bowl, and perhaps also dancing and singing. Gregory Nazianzen, who died in 389, and other Christian writers of the same date, mention the feast, and in particular caution men against feasting to excess, dancing, and crowning the doors (all practices derived from the heathen), urging the celebration after a heavenly and not after an earthly manner. But such a caution had little or no effect, and these practices have continued down to our own day ; and it may be, as Gregory feared, that the worship of the good things of this world, innocent enough in themselves, has tended somewhat to overshadow the more spiritual side of the festival.[1] Be this as it may, the custom continued to flourish, and the Anglo-Norman kings celebrated these festivals with increased splendour, when all the prelates and nobles of the kingdom were by their tenures obliged to attend their sovereigns, to assist in the administration of justice, and in deliberating on the great affairs of the kingdom. On these occasions the King wore his crown, feasted the nobles in the great hall of his palace, and made them presents of robes, &c., as marks of favour ; after which they proceeded to business.[2]

Polydore Virgil says ('Hist. Angl.,' lib. 13) that it was the practice of the English as early as the reign of Henry II. (about 1170) to celebrate their Christmas with plays, masques, and magnificent spectacles, together with games of dice and dancing. He derives many of the particulars from the Roman Saturnalia, and considers the Christmas Prince, or Lord of Misrule, a personage almost peculiar to this country. From this time mummeries (the word 'mumm' is said to be derived from the Danish, to disguise with a mask) and disguisings, with plays and pageants, appear to have been introduced among the diversions of the King and nobles at Christmas ; but they were probably in vogue among the inferior orders at an earlier period,

[1] Sandys, *Christmas Carols*. [2] *Ibid.*

though of a description rude as their habits and poor as their means.

It was the custom of the heathen in the Kalends of January to go about dressed up as wild beasts and cattle, and the sexes also exchanged apparel.

During the Middle Ages it was usual for the household to dance after dinner. Dancing generally took place in the apartment known as 'the great chamber,' but often also in the hall, and sometimes in the gallery, which occupied the whole length of the roof of most fifteenth-century houses. Musical accompaniment was provided by minstrels, or else the ladies themselves would sing; the musicians were on the same floor as the dancers, until later times, and especially at festivals, when they occupied a music gallery over the screens or entrance passage to the hall.[1] There are many allusions in the literature of the period to these after-dinner dances; thus we have Chaucer in his 'Frankeleyne Tale' saying:

> And after dinner gan they to daunce
> And singe also; sauf Dorigen alone.

In thirteenth and fourteenth century romances and fabliaux, again, such as in the romance of 'La Violette,' or that in which a knight, having received hospitality at a feudal castle, after dinner washes his hands, drinks, and then proceeds to dance:

> Ses mains
> Lava, et puis l'autre gent toute,
> Et puis se burent toute à route,
> Et por l'amor don chevalier,
> Se bout trestint apparillier
> De faire *karoles* et danses.[2]

Once more, in the romance of 'Launfal' we have a similar allusion:

> And after mete Syr Gaweyn,
> Sir Gyeryes and Agrafayn
> And Syr Launfal also,
> Went to daunce upon the grene
> Unther the tour ther lay the quene
> Wyth syxty ladyes and mo.

[1] L. Cutts. [2] T. Wright.

Yet again from the same romance :

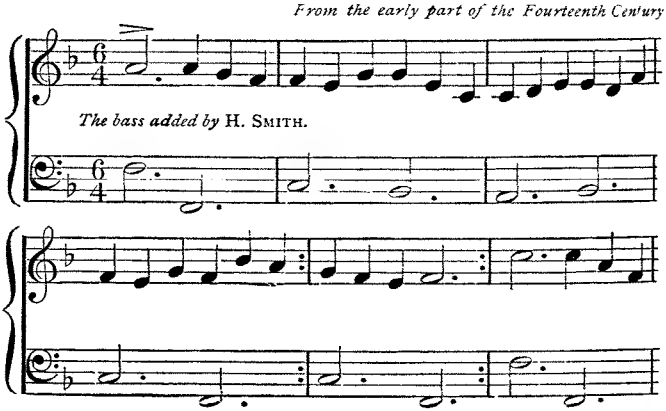
The Quene yede to the formeste ende
Betweene Launfal and Gauweyn the hende (polite)
And after her ladyes bright ;
To daunce they went all yn same
To see them playe hyt was fair game,
A lady and a knyght ;
They had menstrelles of moche honours,
Fy-delers, sytolyrs and trompeters
And else hyt were unryght.

In the French 'Débat de la Demoiselle et de la Bourgeoise' the latter accuses the gentlewoman of late rising, whereupon she replies : 'No ; but we must spend our evening in dancing, and cannot do as you who go to bed the same time as your hens.' A strict household, even of the highest rank, gave no time for such frivolities as dancing : rise at seven, dine at eleven or twelve ; after dinner state business and only fifteen minutes for recreation ; supper at five, and bed at eight, the interval between supper and bed being spent over the wine-cup, a less innocent, certainly less healthful, occupation, than the dance.

ENGLISH DANCE TUNE

(*From Chappell's 'Old English Popular Music,' by kind permission*)

From the early part of the Fourteenth Century





In the fifteenth century dancing received fresh impetus from the introduction of new dances, some of them of a more active and exciting description than their predecessors. One of the characters in the early interlude of the 'Four Elements' talks of persons

> That shall both daunce and spring,
> And torne clean above the grounde
> With fryscas and with gambaudes rounde,
> That all the hall shall ryng.[1]

It was perhaps this new element of 'frisks and gambaudes' that brought about a slight reaction against dancing; at any rate, it is certain that the love of dancing had been carried to a great degree of extravagance, which often led to dissoluteness in social manners, so that the more zealous moralists preached against dancing. Society during this century was undergoing

[1] T. Wright, *History of Domestic Manners.*

much modification ;[1] we know that the middle classes were rising into greater importance, and, as is always the case, they were imitating the manners of those above them in the social scale. But, as invariably happens also, it was the extravagances and evils of the dance which were copied, and we may be sure they did not become less extravagant or less immodest in the repetition, so that it was time to exhort the young maidens 'to be bashful, to pay proper attention to dress, but not to be too eager in dancing.' M. de Montaiglon, in his 'Doctrinal des Filles,' 'admonishes girls to dance the carole with moderation :'

Fille, quant serez en *Karolle*,
Dansez gentiment par mesure,
Car, quant fille se desmesure,
Tel la voit la tient pour folle.

Excellent advice, which we hope had a good effect.

The *Morris Dance*, though one of the most ancient of English dances, has still survived in country districts down to the present day, without having lost any of its most characteristic features, as the carole has done. The Morris dance was probably introduced into England in Edward III.'s reign, and it is connected through the fool, one of its characters, with the gleemen of Saxon times and the Norman jongleurs. It was one of the most popular amusements of Old England. The name is derived from Morisco, a dance peculiar to the Moors, and shows that the dance had a Moorish origin. It was generally performed on May Day, and introduced several characters, varying in numbers, appellation, and dress, according to taste or local customs, many different features being added as time went on. The characters usually represented were out of old English legend or romance, and were such as Robin Hood, Maid Marian, Scarlet, Stokesley, Little John, the Hobby-horse, the Barian or Fool, Tom the Piper with his pipe and tabor, and the Dragon (of which there is no mention before 1585).[2] According to one writer, the dancers dressed in gilt leather and silver paper, and coats of white spangled

[1] T. Wright.

[2] Dyer.

fustian, purses at their girdles, and bells attached to their garters. Stubbes, who wrote in 1595, states that the costume had been altered to 'greene, yellow, or some other wanton colour,' and the dancers tied about thirty or forty bells to their knees These bells were characteristic of a genuine Moorish dance, and were sometimes fastened on the arms as well as the legs. Feathers and garlands in their hats completed the dancers' dress. The dance was usually round a Maypole, which was painted various gay colours, perhaps to match the 'wanton green and yellow' of the dresses. Mr. Peck, in his 'Memoirs of Milton,' says that the dance was usually performed by an equal number of young men, 'who danced in their shirts, with ribbands and little bells about their legs. In England they have always an odd person besides, being a character whom they call Maid Marian. Thus in Shakespeare's words, "they made more matter for a May-morning, having, as a pancake for Shrove Tuesday, *a Morris for Mayday*."'

In the Morisco, the dancers held swords in their hands, with the points upwards; this custom connects the dance with the ancient Pyrrhic or sword dance, and we find that the Goths did the same in their military dance. A frequent trick practised by the Hobby-horse, a character performed by a man dressed in pasteboard with a horse's head, was to carry a dagger stuck in his cheek. In Haydock's translation of 'Lomazzo on Painting,' we read: 'There are other actions of dancing used, as of those who are represented with weapons in their hands going round in a ring, capering skilfully, shaking their weapons after the manner of the *Morris*, with divers actions of meeting, &c.; others hanging Morris bells upon their ankles.' Many quotations can be given to show the popularity and the prevalence of this dance. One opinion is that it is 'a very curious custom, observed by noble, royal, and vulgar persons.'[1] That it was ancient is shown by the fact that Chaucer refers to it in his 'Court of Love.' Stowe's 'Survey of London' states that 'every parish there, or two or three parishes joining together, had their Mayings, and did fetch in Maypoles, with

[1] Tollet.

diverse warlike shews, with good archers, Morrice dancers, and other devices for pastime all the day long.' | It was impossible to keep the people asleep on May morning, and they rose early to observe the rites of May ; in fact, historians tell us that, in the beginning of his reign, Henry VIII. himself, 'with his courtiers, rose on May Day very early to fetch May or greene boughs ;' and indeed the observances of the day were kept with all due rites at Court at least down to James I.'s time.

An exact description of the Morris dance (the Tripudium Mauritanicum) is not easy to give. Some say it is a kind of hornpipe ; at any rate, there was a good deal of action in it, and it cannot be accused of too much sedateness or gravity. Says one of Shakespeare's characters, 'I have seen him caper like a wild *Morisco*, shaking the bloody darts as he his bells.' Yet again, in Marston's 'What You Will' (1607) we find the expressive sentence : 'Your wit skips like a *Morisco*.' Moriscos or Morris-dancers find their place in the masques of the seventeenth century, as in 'Albion's Triumph' (1631), where the seventh entry consists of 'mimicks or moriscos.' Perhaps at the performance of some such masque on the occasion of village festivals (no doubt of frequent occurrence) the bells needed were purchased by the community,[1] for we find this entry in the churchwardens' accounts of the parish of St. Helen's, Abingdon, Berks : 'For two doffin (or dossin) of Morres bells.' Similar entries appear from the first year of the reign of Philip and Mary to the thirty-fourth of Elizabeth : the one quoted is of the year 1560. The editor of the 'Sad Shepherd' mentions feeing a company of Morrice-dancers from Abingdon at Richmond in Surrey so late as the summer of 1783. They appeared then to be making some kind of annual circuit.[2] But Morrice-dancing has not died out in our own day ; it is still common in Oxfordshire and Derbyshire and the surrounding counties, where all the old features of the dance appear, including the bells on the legs, and it is performed on May-day, Holy Thursday, and Whitsun-ales, attended by the 'Fool,' or, as he is generally called, the 'Squire,' and also a lord and lady (the lady

[1] Reed. [2] *Ibid.*

most probably the Maid Marian already mentioned),[1] 'nor is the Hobby-horse forgot.' The dance still survives in some parts of Cheshire and Lancashire, the dancers being dressed in white shirts and velvet knee-breeches, ornamented profusely with gay ribbons, and they carry short sticks tied also with bunches of ribbons, these sticks perhaps being instead of the sword or dagger of the ancient dance. They wear wreaths of flowers round their straw hats; this is an old custom, for from the reign of Henry VIII. it was usual for the Morris-dancers to decorate their hats with a nosegay, or with the herb



Kemp's Dance from London to Norwich, in 1599

thrift, formerly called 'Our Lady's Cushion.' To appear without this was to be 'unmorriced,' and Soto, in 'Women Pleased,' rebukes one of his subordinates for appearing before him unmorriced in these words:

> Where are your bells, then?
> Your rings, your ribbons, friend, and your clean napkin,
> Your nosegay in your hat?[2]

In 1599, William Kemp, a comic actor of high reputation, attracted much attention by dancing the Morris from London to Norwich, and he afterwards published a curious pamphlet,

[1] Reed. [2] Soane.

'as well to refute the lying ballads put forth concerning this exploit, as to testify his gratitude for the favours he had received during his gambols.'[1] The same actor, it is said, 'raised many a roar by dancing the Morris with his men of Gotham, and his "new jigge" rivalled in popularity his "Peter" in "Romeo and Juliet."' The following verses are entitled 'Song on the Introduction of a Whitsun Morris Dance:'

Skip it and trip it nimbly, nimbly,
Tickle it, tickle it lustily;
Strike up the tabour for the wenches' favour,
Tickle it, tickle it lustily.

Let us be seene in Hygate Greene,
To dance for the honour of Holloway.
Sing we are come hither, let us spare for no leather,
To dance for the honour of Holloway.[2]

The dance was certainly known in Scotland, as a verse in the ballad 'Christes Kirk of the Grene' shows; it runs as follows:

Auld Lychtfute thair he did forleit,
And counterfeited Franss,
He used himself as man discreit,
And op the Moreiss danss,
He tuik
At Christes Kirk of the Grene.

From this it would seem that dancing was considered to be quite a French fashion. Scott also in the 'Fair Maid of Perth' has a reference to this dance. Speaking of Fastern's E'en and the jollifications of the day, he specially mentions one company of reveilers who had been particularly applauded and who seemed to be unwilling to conclude their frolic. This is his description: 'The Entry, as it was called, consisted of thirteen persons wearing chamois leather doublets, slashed and laced, green caps, silver tassels, red ribands, white shoes, bells at their knees and ankles, and carrying naked swords in their hands.

[1] Dyce. [2] Daniel.

They exhibited a sword-dance before the King, and repeated it before the door of Simon Glover, where, having made a fresh exhibition of their agility, and drunk to the health of the Fair Maid of Perth, old Simon acknowledged their country, and ordered wine in honour of the Merry Morrice Dancers of Perth.'

A ceremony called 'Disguising,' in which both men and women took part, included Morris-dancing, and the following passage is from Collier's 'History of Dramatic Poetry,' and will close our account of the Morris :—

Furst iij yoman waiters to beir iij torchies to light them into the hall, and when the saide Disguisars ar comyn into the hall than the said parsonnes that berith the saide lightes to make their obeysaunce and depart, or ellis to stand on side, and the iiij minstrallis such as the Lord hath at that time, there to stande in the hall before the disguisars come, and as soon as they come the minstrallis to stand aside and play. And then the disguisars to make their obeysaunce altogeder and daunce. And when the disguisars hath doon their daunces than ½ stand up on the one side and ½ upon the other, if there be no women. Provided always that their women be disguised, then they to come in first. And if the women be disguised then half of the minstrallis to set in the other disguisars with the lights after they have brought in the women and they have daunced, made obeysaunce and stande aside. And they do as the others did before and then stand upon the other side. The men always give the women the first position. The minstrallis always shall bring them in playing the dances to be danced. When they have done in like case the Morris to come in incontinent as appointed. And when they here the said minstrallis play than to come out one after another, as appointed. And when they have done to go forth in like case as they came into the saide toure, or thing devised for them. Always reservid to the master of the disguisings to order it as he shall think best and convenient; and when the Moris is doone then the gentillmen to come unto the women and make their obeisaunce and every of them to taike one by hand and daunce such base daunces as is appointed them ; and that doon then to daunce such rounds as shall be appointed them to daunce togerder by the master of the revills, and that doone to bring the women to their plaices again, and make their obeysaunces, and then depart to their oune plaices where they stood before.

STAINES MORRIS

(*From Chappell's 'Old English Popular Music,' by kind permission*)



From the discussion of Morris dances, the transition is easy to that of May-day celebrations in general; for, as we have

already stated, May Day was the usual time for the Morris-dancers to appear, and the Maypole, with its ribands and garlands, was an important feature of the dance in most localities. 'May-games, Morris-dancings and pageants,' are mentioned as if there was a very close connection between them, and in the seventeenth century they were all very common in all towns and cities throughout the country. The festival of May Day has existed in England from the earliest times, and stands next in importance to Christmas Day. Tollet imagines that it originally came from our Gothic ancestors, and it is certain that Swedes and Goths did welcome the first of May with song and dance; but there is no particular resemblance between their customs and ours. Most nations celebrate the return of spring with some kind of bright and joyous festival, and more especially Northern nations, to whom spring meant so much after a long and dreary Northern winter. Others again trace our customs to the 'Floralia' or 'Maiuma;' but it is now generally agreed that we must look to countries and times still more remote in order to find the first beginnings of our May-day festivities. Maurice (in 'Indian Antiquities,' vol. i.) declares that our May Day is but a repetition of the Phallic festivals of India and Egypt, which in those countries took place upon the entry of the sun into Taurus, to celebrate Nature's renewed fertility.

Collier gives a list of May games, which seem to have taken place throughout the month of May: 'On the 30th of May [1557] was a jolly game in Fanch-church Strett, with drumes and geines and pykes, and the 9 wordes (worthies) dyd ryd, and they had speches evereman, and the Mores-dance and the Souden and the Olevant with the castigel, and the Souden with yonge Morens with Targetts and dartts and the Lord and Lady of the May.' Most of these, with the exception of the Morris dance and the 'Lord and Lady of the May,' have passed out of modern cognisance, but we may add to them the sports which were usual in the seventeenth century, and which, according to Burton, in his 'Anatomy of Melancholy,' gave most delight to town and country people alike. These are

dancing (including rope-dancing), singing, masking, mumming, and stage plays. These, with May-games, wakes, and Whitsun-ales, are reasonable, if in season. 'Let them [*i.e.* the working people] freely feast, sing, dance, have puppet-plays, hobby-horses, tabers, crowds and bagpipes; let them play at ball and barley-brakes; and afterwards plays, masks, jesters, &c., are to be winked at, lest the people should do worse than attend them.'

But of all the May-games, dancing round the Maypole was the most popular, and it is to be found in all parts of the country. The ceremonies of the day began when the youth of both sexes rose just after midnight, and, accompanied by musicians, went in procession to a neighbouring wood, whence they returned at sunrise, laden with all kinds of flowers and green branches, wherewith they decorated themselves and their houses. In other districts, the custom is for people from town and country round to parade the town singing the 'Mayers' Song,' and bearing branches of may, a piece of which they leave at every door. This was at three in the morning. The rest of the day was spent in dancing round the Maypole which stood in the centre of the village, and which was consecrated to the goddess of Flowers. 'This is not the custom of the British people only,' says Brand's 'Popular Antiquities,' 'but it is the custom of the generality of other nations, particularly of the Italians.' Hone also tells us that the 'Tall Pole called a May-Pole' formed the principal attraction of May Day. 'It is covered with flowers and hearbes, and bounde with strings of different colours, and often two or three hundred men, women, and children, follow it with great devotion, and when it is raised and they have feasted they begin to leape and daunce about it as the Heathen did at the dedication of their Idolles.' Ribbons seem to have been the usual decoration of the pole, from which we have the pretty and graceful custom of 'plaiting the Maypole,' still performed in our villages. But it might be ornamented in various ways. Shakespeare speaks of a 'painted Maypole,' and in Tollet's picture we see St. George's red cross or the banner



From a Print (dated 1794) of a Painted Window then at Betley, Staffordshire

of England, and a white pennon or streamer emblazoned with a red cross, and terminating like the blade of a sword.[1]

These Maypoles were of such a size that it was usually necessary for them to be drawn to the place of erection (in most cases the village green) by twenty or thirty yoke of oxen. 'The Lord and Lady of the May' were identified with Robin Hood and his beloved Maid Marian, and they were surrounded by the whole band, with Friar Tuck and Little John, who danced and paraded beside the everlasting hobby-horse and dragon. As these are the characters of the Morris dance, it is natural that that dance, with its characteristic bells of various scales, should form part of the performance, and milkmaids careered about with pyramids of cups, tankards, and salvers, neatly balanced on their heads.[2] The instruments to the sound of which the dance was performed would naturally vary according to locality and period. In Browne's 'Pastorals' we have a reference to the accompaniment of the dance by the strains of the bagpipe :

> I have seen the Lady of the May
> Set in an arbour (on a holy day)
> Built by the Maypole, where the jocund swaines
> Dance with the maidens to the bagpipe strains.

There is an old English dance tune called 'Robene Hude;' perhaps to its sound the youths and maidens footed it merrily on the green, or twined the Maypole. Perhaps to these festivities, too, the translator of the 'Roman de la Rose' refers :

> But haddest thou knowen hym beforne,
> Thou woldest on a booke have sworne,
> Whan thou hym saugh in thylke araye,
> That he, that whylome was so gaye,
> And of the daunce *Jolly Robyn*
> Was tho become a Jacobyn.

Cotgrave has 'Chanson de Robin=a merrie and extemporall song, or fashion of singing, whereto one is ever adding somewhat, or may at pleasure adde what he list.[3] . . .'—a description which would answer very well, one would think, to the

[1] Reed's *Shakespeare*. [2] Eccleston. [3] Murray, *Complaynt of Scotland*.



THE MAYPOLE

(From an Engraving after Joseph Nash)

spontaneous character of the May-day ceremonies. But this is only conjecture, founded on the coincidence of the same name being given to the tune and to the principal character of the dance; however, the matter is but of minor importance.

These dances, too, it may be presumed, led sometimes to ribaldry and license; at any rate, in the third year of Edward VI.'s reign, a fanatic named Sir Stephen preached against the Maypole to such good effect that the owner of every house over which it hung sawed it off and burnt the pieces.[1] Later on, the disciples of Stubbs and Prynne, having discovered that May games were derived from the Floralian Feasts and interludes of the Pagan Romans, solemnised on May 1, concluded that they were idolatry and the worship of Baal, and so determined that the goddess Flora should receive no more gratulations from Maid Marian, Friar Tuck, or Robin Hood, such being a 'superstition derived from the "Sybil's Book," papistical and pagan.' But though the early Reformers succeeded to some extent in suppressing these amusements, it was only for a time, for the restoration of Charles II. brought with it a general restoration of Maypoles also.

Dancing round Maypoles was not confined to country districts; in fact, the rural dances were not so sportive as those near London. A great pole was set up in Cornhill, higher than the steeple of St. Andrew's Church, which was thence called St. Andrew's Undershaft; the Maypole in the Strand was reared with great ceremony in 1661, and was 134 feet high. The last poet who seems to have mentioned this Maypole was Pope:

> Amid the area wide they took their stand,
> Where the tall Maypole once o'erlooked the Strand.

This 'tall Maypole' Sir Isaac Newton begged of the parish, and had it erected in Wanstead, Essex, where it supported the largest telescope then known. The New Church occupies its site:

> But now (so Anne and piety ordain)
> A Church collects the saints of Drury Lane.[2]

[1] Daniel's *Merrie England.* [2] *Ibid.*

The Maypole nearest to London that stood the longest in Hone's recollection was near Kennington Green. It remained until the year 1795, and was mostly frequented by milk-maids. The cult, if one may call it so, of the Maypole had not always stood so low; for the great Dr. Parr, the first Greek scholar and most skilful controversialist of his day, was a patron of May-day sports; opposite his parsonage house at Hatton, near Warwick, stood the parish Maypole, and as each May Day came round, with its dancing and feasting, the learned Doctor was first and foremost of the merry throng.[1]

The milkmaids had a recognised part in the May-day festivities, and they seem to have been wont to perform their part right merrily, for 'to be a milkmaid' and 'to be merry' were almost synonymous terms in olden times, and the 'merry milkmaid' was a usual title. Pepys, in his Diary, has, under the date May 1, 1667: 'To Westminster; on the way met many milkmaids with their garlands upon their pails, and dancing with a fiddler before them.' Misson, in his 'Observations on his Travels in England,' has a fuller account: 'All the pretty young country girls that serve the town with milk borrow abundance of silver plate to make a pyramid, which they adorn with ribbons and flowers, and carry on their heads instead of a pail. They are often accompanied by their fellow-milkmaids and players on the bagpipe or fiddle.' Sometimes a model of a cow with gilt horns, all covered with ribbons formed into bows and rosettes, and interspersed with green oak-leaves and bunches of flowers, replaced the plate. Garlands were worn of various sizes, and sometimes they were carried by porters instead of by the milkmaids themselves. It was customary to stop before customers' doors, and dance a galliard to the sound of a fiddle, for which performance a gratuity was expected.[2] In a set of prints called 'Tempest's Cryes of London,' one is called 'The Merry Milkmaid,' and she is there represented dancing with her milk-pail on her head, decorated with silver cups, tankards, and salvers, which were

[1] Hone's *Every-day Book*. [2] *Ibid.*



MILKMAIDS' DANCE ON MAY DAY

(From a Vauxhall Picture by F. Hayman)

borrowed for the occasion, and were tied together with ribbons and ornamented with flowers. Later on, these were arranged in the form of a pyramid, and were carried by two chairmen upon a wooden horse, the milkmaid going before and performing the dance.

It was in the reigns of James II. and William III. that the dance and its accessories reached this finished point; but the milkmaid had always been celebrated for her light heart. Holinshed tells of the Princess Elizabeth, when she was closely guarded, that once upon a time from her garden at Woodstock she heard a milkmaid singing pleasantly, and ('no marvell,' says the chronicler) wished herself to be a milkmaid too, for the singing maiden's case was better, and her life merrier than her own.

It seems that the milkmaids had a festival of their own; for, according to one authority, 'a milking feast was held formerly on May 29, when dances round the Maypole and old games, such as blind-man's buff, were the favourite pastimes. On this day, when the milkmaids came back from milking, they would ornament their kits with flowers, and deck themselves with garlands, and the young men and lads would run after the lasses to steal a May-day kiss—a show of gallantry which caused dire disaster to many a "meal" of milk, and worked the ruin of many a "better-day" coat.'[1]

THE MERRY MILKMAIDS[2]

(*From Chappell's 'Old English Popular Music,' by kind permission*)



[1] Crowden. [2] *The Dancing-Master*, 1650, &c.





The chimney-sweeps as well as the milkmaids have their share in the May-day festivities. The tallest of their party is always leader, and bears a garland consisting of a large cone of holly and ivy framed on hoops; when the garland stops, the chief and one of the ladies of the party dance in a Menuet de la Cour or some other grave movement. Then they quicken their step, and twirl and whirl in sight of each other on opposite sides of the garland; then they bow over the top and ask donations. This chimney-sweepers' pageant is of quite recent date, as it took place in London for the first time in 1825.[1]

NEW MAY SONG (CHESHIRE)

(*From Egerton Leigh's 'Cheshire Ballads'*)



But where are all those fair maids that used here to dance?
They are gone abroad from hence, to spend their lives
in France.

The custom of May dancing is not confined to England;

[1] Hone, *Every-day Book.*

we find it also in Wales and the Isle of Man. In Wales about the middle of April the question goes round, 'Who will turn out to dance in the summer this year?' and 'Who will carry the garland?' 'Who will be the Cadi?' The Cadi is the leader who makes all the arrangements; he is generally dressed in some comic fancy dress, with his face disguised, and he is the life and soul of the party who assemble on May morning at the village tavern. They form in procession, garland-bearer in front, and when he stops opposite a farmhouse, the violin strikes up some national tune and the dancers move forward to a regular quick step. The music and dancing finally terminate in a *reel*, which in its turn is followed by another dance to the old tune of 'Cheshire Round.'[1] In the Isle of Man we find the celebrated custom of choosing a Queen of the May, so common in many districts still. The day is ushered in by the blowing of horns on the mountains; then in most of the large parishes a maid is chosen from amongst the families of the most wealthy farmers to be Queen. In opposition to her is the Queen of Winter, a man in woman's clothes. Both Queens, accompanied by bands of attendants, set forth from their different quarters, one preceded by violins and flutes, the other by the rough music of tongs and cleavers. A mock battle follows, and the day is ended with feasting.[2]

The following extract from 'Customs and Fashions in Old New England,' by Alice M. Earle, will be interesting in this connection, as showing how the memory of festivities in Old England survived in New England, and how Maypole-dancing died hard in that stern Puritan land: 'A few rather sickly and benumbed attempts were made in bleak New England to celebrate in old English fashion the First of May. A Maypole was erected in Charlestown in 1687, and was promptly cut down.'

The most unbounded observance of the day was held at Merry Mount (now the town of Quincy) in 1628 by roystering Morton and his gay crew. Bradford says: 'They set up a Maypole, drinking and dancing aboute it many days togeather,

[1] Hone, *Every-day Book*. [2] Dyer, *British Popular Customs*.

inviting the Indian women for their consorts, dancing and frisking togeather like so many fairies or furies rather.' This Maypole was a stately pine-tree eighty feet high, with a pair of buck's horns nailed at the top, and with 'sundry rimes and



Dance of Peasants on May Day
(*From Queen Mary's Psalter*)

verses affixed.' Stern Endicott rode down ere long to investigate matters, and at once cut the 'idoll Maypole down,' and told the junketers that he hoped to hear of their 'better walking, else they would find their Merry Mount but a woful mount."'

The MS. in the British Museum known as 'Queen Mary's Psalter' furnishes us with many illustrations of the manners of the early part of the fourteenth century, and gives several pictures of dances of a peculiar character, danced by youths and maidens, by demure-looking citizens and their wives, by monkeys, or by monks and nuns. It would require a lively imagination to represent adequately the times when England was Merrie England, the merry land. Then knights rode through Knightrider Street to Smithfield to hold their tournaments,[1] which tournaments generally ended in banquets, dancing, and pageantry of all kinds, involving an extravagant expenditure of money and time, and these festivities increased in magnificence from the days of Henry VIII. to those of James I. Antic dances, masquerades, jigs, and sarabands, also a quarterstaff dance, a chair dance, &c., were performed at the old Elephant ground in Smithfield.[2] Of the old English dances which bore the following curious names, no descriptions exist:—'An old man is a bed full of bones,' 'If all the world were paper,' 'I loved thee once, I love no more,' 'Greensleeves and Pudding Pies.' Of the last one, indeed, we know a little more than the name, though our knowledge does not amount to more than the fact that it was probably an active dance. It is mentioned twice in the 'Merry Wives of Windsor:' 'Let the sky rain potatoes, let it thunder to the tune of Greensleeves;' and—a most impressive sentence—'They do no more keep pace together than the 100th Psalm to the tune of Greensleeves!'

GREENSLEEVES AND PUDDING PIES

(*From Chappell's 'Old English Popular Music,' by kind permission*)



[1] Daniel's *Merrie England.* [2] *Ibid.*



Alas my love, ye do me wrong
To cast me off discurteously:
And I have loved you so long,
Delighting in your companie.
Greensleeves was all my joy,
Greensleeves was my delight:
Greensleeves was my heart of gold,
And who but Ladie Greensleeves.

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries out-of-door dancing was very common. Stow intimates that before his time the common people were wont to recreate themselves abroad in the open air, and he laments the use of those diversions which were followed within doors and out of reach of the public eye. Perhaps because they were performed out of doors the common country-dances of the beginning of the fifteenth century were simple, not being marked by the intricate and mazy figures which they now possess. Some ancient writers speak of the roundelay or roundel as a kind of air appropriated to dancing, and the term dancing seems to imply little more than dancing in a circle with hands joined. It seems that, while dancing was practised in the fields and other open places, it was no disgrace for men of the gravest professions to join in this recreation.[1] It is not very long ago since the judges, in compliance with ancient custom, danced annually on Candlemas Day in the hall of Serjeants' Inn. That this custom was very ancient is to be seen from the following account given by Dugdale of the revels at Lincoln's Inn:

'And that nothing might be wanting for their encouragement in this excellent study [the Law] they have very anciently had Dancings for their recreations and delight, commonly called revels,

[1] Hawkins, *History of Music*.

allowed at certain seasons ; and that by special order of the society, as appeareth in 9 Hen. VI., viz., that there should be four revels that year, and no more ; one at the feast of All-hallown, another at the feast of St. Erkenwald, the third at the feast of the Purification of our Lady, and the fourth at Midsummer Day, one person yearly elected of the Society being made choice of for director in those pastimes called the Master of the Revels. Which sports were long before then used.'

And again he says :

'Nor were these exercises of dancing merely permitted, but thought very necessary, as it seems, and much conducing to the making of gentlemen more fit for their books at other times; for by an order made 6th Feb. 7 Jac. it appears that the under barristers were by decimation put out of commons for example's sake, because the whole bar offended by not dancing on Candlemas Day preceding, according to the ancient order of this Society, when the judges were present with this that if the like fault were committed afterwards they should be fined or disbarred.'—Dugd. 'Orig. Jurid.' cap. 64.

It is recorded by Sandys that 'the dancing and singing of Benchers in the great Inns of Court is in some sort founded upon interest,' for they are said to hold some privilege or other on condition of dancing about the fire in the middle of their hall, singing 'Round about our Coal Fire!' In 1594 there was a celebrated Christmas at Gray's Inn, of which an account was published under the title of 'Gesta Grayorum,' a title founded on 'Gesta Romanorum,' then very popular. The festivities wound up with a masque performed before Queen Elizabeth at Shrovetide. She was so much pleased with this, and thought so highly of the performance, that, on the courtiers 'dancing a measure' after the masque was ended, she exclaimed, 'What! shall we have bread and cheese after a banquet?'

It is to the Elizabethan period that we must pay most attention, for then we find the greatest number and variety of dances. In Henry VIII.'s reign indeed we note that masques and pageants were much in vogue, and the King himself was a frequent performer as well as spectator; especially at Christ-



THE CUSHION DANCE, ELIZABETHAN, 1570

mas time was this the case, for we are told that 'on the 30th of December and the 3rd of January were solemn Justs holden, when at night the King and fifteen others with him came to Bridewel, and there putting on masking apparell took his barge and rowed to the Cardinall's (Wolsey) place, where were at supper many Lords and Ladyes, who danced with the maskers, and after the dancing was made a Banquet.' Even under Edward VI., Christmas was still celebrated with much festivity, though its splendour was somewhat abated. It is said that the young King was so much grieved at Somerset's condemnation that it was thought necessary to divert his mind by additional pastimes the following Christmas,[1] and we may be sure dancing formed part of these. It is but natural that in Mary's troubled reign such sports should only survive in remote parts of the kingdom, so that when Elizabeth came to the throne, and a weight of gloom was removed from men's minds, they would turn with all the more eagerness to dance and song, for which they had recently had no heart. We consequently find a great impetus given to dancing at this time. Some of these dances demanded a considerable statcliness of carriage and demeanour. It must have been in some such stately dance-measure that the grave Lord Burleigh joined, for we cannot imagine him taking part in a lively jig, which dance was, after all, frequently performed with much vivacity by Elizabethan knights and dames. The formality of the usual Court dances was necessitated by the dress of the period ; hoops, high-heeled shoes, and more especially towers of powdered hair overlaid with marvellous structures of lofty ornament, on which more rapid movement might have entailed disastrous ruin, were not favourable to briskness of movement. The Queen herself was a great patroness of the dance, so that no wonder it flourished in her reign. It is related of a certain masque, to which Henry and William Lawes wrote the music, that 'it was very well performed in the dances, scenes, clothing, and music, and the Queen was pleased to observe at her going away that she liked

[1] Sandys' *Christmas Carols.*

it very well,'[1] after which we may be sure the masque had great popularity.

JOAN SANDERSON, OR THE CUSHION DANCE

(*From Chappell's 'Old English Popular Music,' by kind permission*)



The Cushion Dance often concluded a country wake or other general meeting.[2] In Elizabeth's time it was performed at Court with great gravity and solemnity by all the company, lords and ladies, grooms and kitchenmaids, coming with the

[1] Collier, *History of English Dramatic Poetry.* [2] Hone's *Every-day Book.*

trenchmore after the great measures, corantoes, and galliards.[1] It continued to be a favourite all through the century, and the description here given of it is from Playford's 'Dancing Master' (1698), but it probably possessed the same features in Elizabeth's time. It is called a 'pretty little provocating dance.' The dance is begun by a single person, man or woman, who, taking a cushion in hand, dances about the room, and at the end of a short time stops and sings: 'This dance it will no further go,' to which the musician answers: 'I pray you, good sir, why say you so?' 'Because Joan Sanderson will not come to.' 'She must come to whether she will or no,' returns the musician, and then the dancer lays the cushion before a woman; she kneels and he kisses her, singing 'Welcome, Joan Sanderson.' Then she rises, takes up the cushion, and both dance and sing 'Prinkum, prankum is a fine dance.' Afterwards the woman takes the cushion, and does as the man did. The kissing episode is usual in most dances of the time, and probably helped to make them so popular; in fact, a kiss was the established fee of a lady's partner. So King Henry VIII. says: 'Sweetheart, I were unmannerly to take you out and not to kiss you.' And also, in 'A Dialogue between Custom and Veritie concerning the Use and Abuse of Dauncing and Minstrelsie,' we read:

> But some reply, what foole would daunce
> If that when daunce is doon
> He may not have at ladyes lips
> That which in daunce he won?

This custom is still prevalent in some parts of the kingdom; when the fiddler thinks the young people have had music enough, he makes his instrument squeak out two notes which all understand to say, Kiss her![2] At the end of each strathspey or jig a particular note from the fiddle used to summon the rustic to the agreeable duty of saluting his partner.

> They hear when every dance is done,
> They hear when every fit is o'er,

[1] Selden, quoted by Dyer.

[2] Ritson.

The fiddle's squeak, that call to bliss,
Ever followed by a kiss.—WORDSWORTH.

Another country-dance called in Elizabeth's time 'Sellenger' or 'Sillinger' is the St. Leger Round, one of the oldest dance tunes now extant. It is also called 'The Beginning of the World,' and is mentioned by Taylor, the Water-poet, in his book 'The World runs on Wheels.' It is also described by Playford as follows: 'The dancers take hands, go round twice and back again; then all set, turn, and repeat; then lead all forward and back, and repeat; two singles and back, set and turn single, and repeat; sides all and repeat; arms all and repeat; danced as often in circles as in parallel lines.'

SELLENGER'S ROUND, OR THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD

(*From Chappell's 'Old English Popular Music,' by kind permission*)





The dance was a daily amusement at the Court, and most dances were of foreign origin.

Edward Philips (Milton's nephew), in a chapter on the mode of balls, makes the dancing-master utter the following speech: 'Come, stir yourselves, maidens, 't will bring a fresh colour into your cheeks;' and Bess, who has not been yet properly tutored, replies: 'And, by the Mass, that will I do, and Sarah

shall dance a North-country dance before us too. I warrant it will please the ladies better than all your French whisks and frisks.' But from this fine contempt expressed by the untutored mind for French airs and graces, we are not to conjecture that all our popular dances were native to the country, and that we borrowed only Court dances from our neighbours. We see from the title of a treatise written in 1521 that a description of foreign dances was desired by the reading public—since we are told that the demand creates the supply.

NONESUCH, OR A LA MODE DE FRANCE[1]

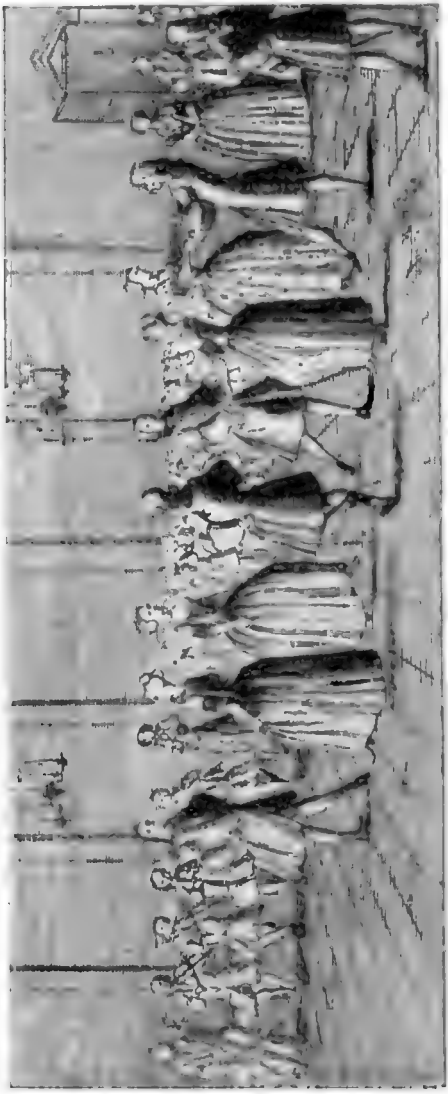
(*From Chappell's 'Old English Popular Music,' by kind permission*)



[1] *The Dancing-Master*, 1650, &c.



KING CHARLES II AND PRINCESS ELIZABETH DANCING AT THE HAGUE



The Country Dance

(From an Engraving after William Hogarth)

This is the title, given at the conclusion of 'The Introductory to wryte and to pronounce French, compiled by Alexander Barclay :' 'Here foloweth the maner of dauncynge of ball daunces after the use of Fraunce and other places, translated out of frenche in englysche by Robert Coplande.' To take one instance out of many, the Bergomask (which Bottom proposed that two of his company should perform), an old Italian dance taking its name from the peasants of Bergamo, a country belonging to the Venetians, was very popular among all classes. All the buffoons in Italy affect to imitate the ridiculous jargon of these peasants, and thence it became also a custom to imitate their manner of dancing, which spread from Italy into England.

Corantos, galliards, trenchmores, brawls, jigs, and fancies, the lavolta and the pavin (pavane) were all in vogue at Court; but perhaps the favourites were the lavolta (something like our galop or waltz) and the old chivalric pavin. The Queen had an official, a Court clown and dancer, who perhaps was a kind of master of the ceremonies for arranging the dances, and was called the 'Undumpisher,' from Dump, the name of a now forgotten dance.[1]

The Lavolta or *la Volta*, as the name implies, is of Italian origin; it passed from Italy to Provence, then through the rest of France to England. M. Bodin, a Parisian advocate, and a writer on demonology, gravely ascribed its importation into France to witchcraft! The chief point of the dance seems to be that the man turns his partner round several times, and then assists her in making a high spring or cabriole.[2] Great care and ingenuity are required in the management of this *volta*. The dance is referred to in 'Henry the Fifth.'

The Passamezzo and Pavan may be taken together, as we find them sometimes confused, though they are really separate dances. They were imported either from France, Spain, or Italy. In a book translated from the French by I. Alford are two passamezzo tunes printed in letters to the lute notation.

[1] Daniel. [2] Douce.

Ben Jonson speaks of Spanish pavans in 'The Alchymist;' Brantôme also mentions the pavan in his 'Dames Illustres,' and says he saw it danced by Francis I. Florio, in his Italian Dictionary of 1598, has 'Passamezzo, a passameasure in dancing, a cinque-pace,' and, though one English word is corrupt, the other serves to show a part at least of the figure of this dance; it consisted of several steps round the room, then crossing it in the middle. Brantôme calls it 'le passamesso d'Italie,' and it was particularly in use among the Venetians.[1] Many dances were perhaps called passa-measures or passy-measures, and it may have been a usual name for any kind of dance music. In 'Twelfth Night' we have the expression, 'a passy-measure pauyn,' which various editors have made into 'a passy-measure, or a pavin,' or by reversing the u before the y, 'a past-measure panicin.' 'A passy-measure pavin' may, however, mean a pavin danced out of tune. Sir Toby called the surgeon by this name because he was drunk.[2] The name pavan (pavin or pavyn) has received two derivations—one that it is an Italian term, derived from Padua, where it is said to have been invented; thus in Alford's 'Instructions for the Lute' the name is spelt both 'paduane' and 'pavane.' The other derivation comes from its stately and majestic character; namely, from pavo, a peacock. It was danced by gentlemen in cap and sword, by lawyers in their gowns, by princes in their mantles, and by ladies in dresses with long sweeping trains; and the motion of these garments in the dance is said to have resembled those of a peacock's tail. Hence the suitability of the name! The name pavan was then transferred from the dance to its music, and we find in Bailey's Dictionary that it is called the lowest kind of instrumental music: every pavin has its galliard, a lighter air made out of the former.[3] We may gather that it was sometimes looked on as rather dull from the epithets 'a doleful pavin' and 'a grave pavin,' descriptions which do not apply to a very lively dance.

[1] Douce, *Illustrations of Shakespeare.*
[2] Reed, *Shakespeare's Plays.*
[3] *Ibid.*

A dance very frequently mentioned in contemporary literature is the Brawl: the word comes from the French *branle*, which means a dance. Its foreign origin was generally acknowledged. 'How meanst thou? *brawling* in French?' we read in 'Love's Labour's Lost;' and in Ben Jonson's 'Masque of Time Vindicated:'

> The graces did them footing teach;
> And at the old *Italian brawls*
> They danced your mother down.

So in Massinger's 'Picture:'

> 'Tis a *French brawl*, an apish imitation
> Of what you really perform in battle.

And again from an old poem, date 1569:

> Good fellowes must go learne to daunce,
> The brydeal is full near a:
> There is a *brall* come out of France,
> The first ye harde this yeare a.
> But I must leape and thou must hoppe,
> And we must turn all three a;
> The fourth must bounce it like a toppe,
> And so we shall agree a.
> I praye the minstrell make no stoppe
> For we will merye be a.

Pepys speaks of a ball he went to at Whitehall where the King and other lords and ladies danced the brantle or branle, 'espèce de danse de plusieurs personnes, qui se tiennent par la main, et qui se mènent tour-à-tour.' After that the King led a lady a single coranto; then the other lords did likewise. Then followed the country-dances, the King leading the first, which he called for, and which was the old dance of England, 'Cuckolds all Awry.' This was in 1662. The name indicates a shaking or swinging motion, and the dance was performed by several persons uniting hands in a circle and giving each other shakes, the steps changing with the time; it consisted of three pas and pied-joint, the time being given by four strokes of the bow; when it was repeated it was termed a double brawl.

Amidst a great variety of brawls mentioned in the curious treatise on dancing entitled 'Orchésographie,' there is a Scotch brawl with music.[1]



We have seen that a dagger or sword often formed part of a morris-dancer's equipment, and apparently the custom of wearing a sword while dancing—for show, not for use—was a very common one. 'I think wee were as much dread or more of our enemies' (says Stafforde's 'Briefe Conceipt of English Pollicy,' 1581) 'when our gentlemen went simply and our serving-men plainely, without cuts or gardes, bearing their heavy swords or buckelers on their thighes insted of cuts and gardes and *light dancing-swords*; and when they rode carrying good speares in theyr hands instede of white rods, which they carry now more like ladies than men.' Such weapons were called 'dancing-rapiers,' and the contrast between swords worn for use and those worn only for show is well brought out in Greene's 'Quip for an Upstart Courtier'—'one of them carrying his cutting sword of choller, the other his dancing-rapier of delight.' The custom of wearing swords in the dancing schools[2] is exemplified in a curious story related in 'Newes from the North' (1579), where 'Pierse Plowman sheweth how his neighbour and he went to the tavern and to the dauncing schoole and what happened' in these words:

Now was there one man of our company that was as deaf as a doore naile. When we were come into the schoole, the musitions were playing and one dauncing of a galiard, and even at our entry he was beginning a trick as I remember of sixteens or seventeens. I doo not very well remember, but wunderfully he leaped, flung and took on, which the deaf man beholding, and not hearing any noise

[1] Douce, *Illustrations of Shakespeare.* [2] *Ibid.*

of the musick, thought verily that he had been stark mad, and out of his wit, and of pure pittie and compassion ran to him and caught him in his arms and held him hard. The dauncer not knowing his good meaning, and taking it to the wurst, drew his *dagger*, and smote the man on the head very sore.

Most of the dances referred to in the following portion of a dialogue from the 1617 edition of Heywood's 'A Woman Killed with Kindness' have been already mentioned. The *hay*, which was borrowed from the French, is further mentioned by Evelyn and in 'Love's Labour's Lost;' carols also were sung to the tune of 'Hay.' Of 'John, kiss me now,' we have this from the 'Anatomy of Melancholy:' 'Yea, many times this love will make old men and women that have more toes than teeth dance "John, kiss me now."'

JOHN, COME KISS ME NOW!

(*From Chappell's 'Old English Popular Music,' by kind permission*)

WILLIAM BYRD



Jack Shine. Come, what shall it be? Rogero?
Jen. Rogero! No; we will dance the 'Beginning of the World.'
Sisly. I love no dance so well as 'John, come kiss me now.'

Nich. I that have ere now deserv'd a cushion, call for the *cushion dance.*

R. Brick. For my part, I like nothing so well as 'Tom Tyler.'

Jen. No, we'll have the 'Hunting of the Fox.'

Jack Shine. The Hay! the Hay! there's nothing like the Hay.

Here they dispute, and it is settled by—

Jenkins. . . . . Let me speak for all and we'll have 'Sellinger's Round.'

Besides the dances partially described above, there are many mentioned in literature of which we have little or no knowledge. 'Canary it with your feet,' says one of the characters in 'Love's Labour's Lost.' This was a favourite dance in the Canary Islands and Spain, and thence must have been introduced into England; it originated from a ballet composed for a masquerade, in which the performers were habited as kings and queens of Morocco, or savages, and the following is a description of it: A lady is taken out by a gentleman, they dance together; he leads her to the end of the hall, always looking at her, leaves her, then makes up to her again, and retreats as before. Then his partner does the same, and this is repeated several times with various steps. The dance was sometimes accompanied by castanets. The following is the tune, taken from Arbeau:[1]

CANARY



The poet Barclay, in his 'Eclogues' (1508), has made a shepherd boast of his skill in archery, to which he adds:

> I can dance the *Raye*, I can both pipe and sing,
> If I were mery, I can both hurle and fling.[2]

[1] Douce, *Illustrations of Shakespeare.* [2] Strutt, *Sports and Pastimes.*

We know no more of this dance. Another old dance, apparently of quick movement, is Barnaby. Thus Cotton's 'Virgil Travestie:'

> Bounce cries the port hole, out they fly,
> And make the world dance Barnaby.[1]

Then the 'Satyre's Dance' is mentioned in the 'Winter's Tale.' All that we know of it is that a song of that name occurs in an old collection of songs by Thomas Ravenscroft.

It may be noticed in reading Shakespeare that the word *measure* means a dance as well as its ordinary meaning. Thus in 'Much Ado:' 'If the prince be too impatient, tell him there is *measure* in everything, and so dance out the answer.' And in 'Richard the Second:'

> My lip can keep no *measure* in delight
> When my poor heart no *measure* keeps in grief.[2]

And, as even Bacon did not consider it beneath his dignity to perform a measure, we may be sure it was a dignified dance.

The chief amusements of James I. and his Court were masques and emblematic pageants, mainly composed by Ben Jonson, but often spoilt by the audience insisting upon many introductions which were not in good taste. In the next reign, however, Charles's fine taste, aided by Buckingham, Jonson, Lawes the musician, Inigo Jones, and others, produced the most exquisite entertainments. The masque was composed of dialogue, singing, and dancing, combined on the basis of some fable. It was got up at prodigious expense, and one in particular, presented at Whitehall by the Inns of Court in 1633, cost the enormous sum of 21,000*l.*

In the masque entitled 'The Night and the Hours,' the first scene represented a double valley—one side dark clouds, on the other a green vale. From this grove extended a dancing place, with the bower of Flora on the right and the house of Night on the left, while between them was a hill. In the 'Lord's Masque' the scene was again divided into

[1] Nares' *Glossary.* [2] Reed, *Shakespeare's Plays.*

two parts, the lower being first discovered, on which there appeared a wood in perspective. The upper part appeared suddenly, by the fall of a curtain, a heaven of clouds of all hues, whence eight maskers descended with music of a full song. On reaching ground, the cloud broke in twain and disappeared, and the wood also, a perspective view taking their places.[1] Masques and pageants of such gorgeous description as the above were continued at Court, in spite of the attempts of the Puritans to abolish all Christmas commemorations. But with the Restoration dance and song were renewed once more.

We can well imagine the great dames of those days, with their long trains and powdered hair, and their beautiful fans made of ostrich and other feathers, executing the stately dances of the time. Of the minuet, imported from France, a dancing-master is reported to have said that he knew nothing, though he had devoted his whole life to the study of it; on hearing which Hogarth replied that he was glad he was a painter, as some bounds might be set to the study of his art.[2] The saraband, danced by our ancestresses with great grace and dignity, was very famous. 'I remember,' said an old beau of the last age, speaking of his mother as one of the most accomplished women of her time, 'that when Hamet ben Hadji, the Morocco Ambassador, was in England, my mother danced a saraband before him with a pair of castanets in each hand, and that his Excellency was so delighted with her performance that, as soon as she had done, he ran to her, took her in his arms, and kissed her, protesting that she had half persuaded him that he was in his own country.'[3]

Dickens says somewhere that the observance of Sunday varies with the latitude or longitude of the place. 'Go north and you must not whistle; come south and you may play the fiddle; move sideways a little towards the east and you may whistle and fiddle and go to the play.' Dancing would, I dare say, be included in the diversions of the Eastern Sunday;

[1] Eccleston, *English Antiquities* [2] Hone. [3] Hawkins

but, leaving Sunday observance on one side, it is true that different localities vary in their dances as well as in their other habits, and I propose now to notice a few dances which are always connected with certain districts.

In Oxford we find a sport called Candle-Rush, or Leap-Candle. It is danced by young girls only, who place a candlestick in the middle of the room, draw up their skirts, and dance backwards and forwards over it, singing :

The tailor of Biciter he has but one eye,
He cannot cut out a pair of green galagaskins if he were to die.

Not very elegant, one may say, but original at any rate.

In Wiltshire, Dancing round the Harrow was a common amusement on the anniversaries of wedding-days, and was followed by a good supper. Going south to Cornwall, we are not surprised that a county which maintained its own Celtic speech until quite recently should also retain its own peculiar dances.

The Fadé Dance, or the Furry Dance, takes place in the borough of Helston on Furry Day, May 8, which is to the dwellers in those parts what Christmas Day is to most English people. The word *fadé* is an old Cornish word meaning to go, and is often corrupted into *faddy* ; while *furry* is by some authorities derived from the Cornish *fuer*, signifying a fair or merry-making.[1] The origin of the dance is uncertain. It used to be deemed a remnant of the Roman Floralia, but that idea is now believed to be incorrect ; others, again, supposed that it was organised in honour of the victory of St. Michael. The best authorities can go no further than that it is part of ancient May-Day festivities. The following lines were written on this dance :

Flinging open each door, let us enter and frisk,
Though the master be all in a pother ;
For away from our home as we merrily whisk,
We will *fadé* it quick through another.

An interesting description of this floral *fête* by Mr. Quin

[1] Whitcombe, *Bygone Days of Cornwall.*

appeared in his paper, the 'Royal Cornwall Gazette,' May 13, 1864, and is as follows :

There were forty-one couples. They first trip on in couples hand in hand, during the first part of 'Furry Dance' tune, forming a long string, the gentleman leading his partner with his right hand.

Second part of tune : The first gentleman turns, with both hands, the lady behind him, and her partner turns the same way with the first lady, then each gentleman in the same manner with his own partner, then trip as before, each part of the tune being repeated. The other couples pair and turn the same way and at the same time. The movement is elegant. The party proceeded up one side of Mensage Street and down the other to Wendron Street, passing through all the houses they chose. The dance terminated in the assembly-room at the Angel with 'The Triumph.'

In this county also it is usual on the feast of St. John the Baptist to make fires and kindle them at midnight—a religious ceremony of most remote antiquity, especially among Celtic nations. It is probably a vestige of the worship of the fire-god Bel. The people then dance and leap round and over the fire. This midnight dancing is often found among Celtic races. In the Orkney Island of North Ronaldshay there is a large stone nine or ten feet high and four feet broad. No tradition is preserved concerning it ; it may have been erected to commemorate some great event, for administering justice, or for religious worship. At any rate, the priest of the district has seen fifty people assembled there on the first day of the year dancing by moonlight, with no music but their own singing.

Cornish boys and girls still keep up the old custom of *Goosey Dancing*. On Christmas Eve they rifle their parents' wardrobes, and, thus disguised, dance, sing, and beg money, and they often keep it up during the whole week.[2] We find the same idea in the Scilly Isles. There, the first Monday after Twelfth Day is called Plough Monday, as it is the ploughman's holiday. The young people have instituted a sort of gallantry termed 'goose dancing,' probably derived from the word

[1] Hone. [2] Whitcombe, *Bygone Days of Cornwall.*

'guised' dancing, like the children's custom in Cornwall. The young women dress up as young men, the young men as young women, and, thus disguised, they visit their neighbours, where they dance and make jokes.[1]

It may seem a far cry from the Scilly Isles to the Isle of Man, but probably they are not so far removed in race as in geographical position. At any rate, a country which has retained so persistently its own peculiar form of government may be supposed to keep its own forms of dancing also, and therefore deserves some notice. On Twelfth Day, January 6, the *Gienys Dance* takes place, and the 'mainstyr,' or master



Sword Dance

(*From Eccleston's 'English Antiquities,'* 1847)

of the ceremonies, appoints every man his 'tegad' or valentine for the ensuing year. On the same day there was a peculiar pastime called the *Lackets*. A number of persons of both sexes were invited, and after supper they began to dance, during which dance the *lavare vane* was introduced, amid much laughter and feigned consternation. It consisted of a horse's head, which, half concealed by a white sheet, snapped at passers-by. There is a somewhat similar custom in Cheshire, there called Old Hob.[2] The Manx have also many popular jigs and reels, which

[1] Hone. [2] Harrison, *Mona Miscellany*.

are danced by four or five couples to the sound of a fiddle. English country dances are unknown there.

Turning now to Northern England, we find there that the sword dance still survives, and is performed in some districts even up to the present day. Wallis, in his 'History of Northumberland,' derives this dance from the 'saltatio armata' of the Roman Militia. It takes place at Christmas, the Yuletide of the Druids. Young men march from village to village, and from house to house, dressed in fancy attire, and before the entrance of every house they entertain the family with the antic dance or 'chorus armatus,' accompanied by music, and holding swords and spears in their hands erect and shining; for their pains they receive a small gratuity. One of the company is distinguished from the rest by his more peculiar costume, a fox's skin generally serving him for a covering and ornament to his head, the tail hanging down his back; this is the leader, who does not mingle in the dance. It will be observed that there is a slight similarity between this and the morris-dancing. A morris dance where swords were employed was performed in Lincolnshire in 1779. In the North Riding of Yorkshire the sword dance is performed from St. Stephen's Day until the new year. The dancers usually consist of six youths dressed in white decorated with ribands, attended by a fiddler, a youth of the name of Bessy, and also by one who personates a doctor. They travel from village to village: one youth acts the part of king in a kind of farce which consists chiefly of singing and dancing; the Bessy interferes while they are making a hexagon with their swords, and is killed. In more modern sword dances the swords are formed into a figure; then they lay them down on the ground and dance round them.

The following account is taken from the 'Westminster Budget,' February 16, 1894:

> And a party of pitmen gave an exhibition of the ancient pastime of sword-dancing. Once a popular custom throughout the kingdom, it now survives in very few counties, and has probably been largely kept alive in Northumberland by the interest taken in it by the

noble house of Percy. Every Christmas time a party from one of the pit villages visits Alnwick Castle ; and occasionally in the towns of Durham and Northumberland at this season of the year sets of sword-dancers are to be met with. Each party consists of five dancers, two outside men (corresponding to the corner men of the minstrel troupes) and a fiddler. The dancers are dressed in a suitable and simple costume, consisting of a white shirt and black velvet knee-breeches, and each man is provided with a pliant two-handed sword. The performance consists of a series of evolutions, many of them being extremely complicated, executed by the five dancers, each of whom holds one end of his own sword and one of his neighbour's. The figures or 'knots' follow each other with extreme rapidity for fifteen or twenty minutes, every movement being in strict time to the music, the dance ending by the swords being woven into a star, which is held aloft by the leader. The revival of this beautiful and ancient dance roused the greatest enthusiasm amongst the audience.

We have already noticed Miss Earle's account of Maypole dancing in New England, and it may be interesting now to turn to her account of the advance of other forms of dancing there. The old Adam appeared even in those stern colonists, and they turned eagerly to dancing ; the savages themselves were not more fond of dancing than 'the colonists who came after them. Dancing schools were forbidden in New England by the authorities, but dancing could not be repressed in an age in which the range of conversation was necessarily narrow and the appetite for physical activity and excitement almost insatiable.' It seems that dancing was forbidden in Massachusetts taverns and at weddings, but it was encouraged at Connecticut ordinations. John Cotton states his objection to be not of dancing as a whole, 'even mixt,' but of 'lascivious dancing to wanton ditties with amourous gestures and wanton dalliances.' In 1713 we find a ball in Boston lasting from six in the afternoon to three in the morning ; while, on the other hand, sober folk were reading 'An Arrow against Profane and Promiscuous Dancing drawn out of the Quiver of the Scriptures by the Ministers of Christ

at Boston.' And though one dancing-master was forbidden to set up his school, we find that 'Abigail Hutchinson was entered to lern to dance' somewhere in Boston in 1717. 'By revolutionary times old and young danced with zest at balls, at "turtle-frolics," and at weddings. President Washington and Mrs. General Greene danced upwards of three hours without once sitting down, and General Greene called this diversion of the august father of his country "a little frisk." By 1791 we find Rev. John Bennett in his "Letters to a Young Lady" recommending dancing as a proper and healthful exercise.' Far indeed have we travelled from the early simplicity of the Pilgrim Fathers! We find that the New England contra-dances have as strange names as some of the English dances already quoted; such are, Old Father George, Cape Breton, High Betty Martin, Rolling Hornpipe, Constancy, Orange Tree, Springfield, Assembly, The President, Miss Foster's Delight, Petty Coatee, Priest's House, the Lady's Choice, and Leather the Strap.

The following quaint song inscribed under an odd print of 'Vestris Teaching a Goose to Dance,' belonging to last century, is an eighteenth-century plea for the dance :[1]

Of all the fine accomplishments, sure dancing far the best is,
But if a doubt with you remains, behold the goose and Vestris ;
And a dancing we will go, will go, &c.

Let men of learning plead and preach, their toil 'tis all in vain ;
Sure, labour of the heels and hands is better than the brain.
And a dancing, &c.

Then talk no more, ye men of arts, 'bout keeping light and shade,
Good understanding in the heels is better than the head.
And a dancing, &c.

Great Whigs, and the great Tories too, both in and out will dance,
Join hands, change sides, and figure in, now sink, and now advance.
And a dancing, &c.

[1] Quoted by Daniel.

Let Oxford boast of ancient lore, and Cam of classic rules,
Noverre might lay you ten to one his heels against your schools.
And a dancing, &c.

Old Homer sung of gods and kings in most heroic strains,
Yet scarce could get, we have been told, a dinner for his pains.
And a dancing, &c.

Poor Milton wrote the most sublime 'gainst Satan, Hell, and Vice,
But very few would quit a dance to purchase Paradise.
And a dancing, &c.

The soldier risks health, life, and limbs, his fortune to advance,
While Pique and Vestris fortunes make by one night's single dance.
And a dancing, &c.

'Tis all in vain to sigh and grieve, or idly spend our breath,
Some millions now, and those unborn, must join the dance of Death.
And a dancing, &c.

Yet while we live let's merry be, and make of care a jest,
Since we are taught what is, is right; and what is right is best.
And a dancing, &c.

CHAPTER VI

THE DANCE IN SCOTLAND, IRELAND AND WALES

SCOTLAND

SCOTTISH dances stand in a category of their own, to which the ordinary canons do not apply. They are sometimes very effective and are capable of considerable artistic development,[1] but their style—peculiarly their own, and peculiarly adapted to the people—cannot be treated with full justice unless it has been thoroughly mastered. Grace in dancing has been defined as 'fitness of parts and good attitude;' and grace of this kind is certainly to be found in the Scottish national dances, for every movement of the body is intimately connected with the spirit and aim of the dance. Those who only associate dancing with the Highland Schottische as danced in England have but a poor idea of the native performance. Originally this dance was a martial one, and therefore women were not supposed to take part in it. What sounds and looks well on a battlefield is not equally appropriate to the ball-room.

The Scots follow the amusement of the dance with delight and enthusiasm. Their fondness for it amounts to a passion. After the toil of a long day, young men and women will walk many miles to enjoy a dance, which seems to them to be indeed a recreation, in the pursuit and enjoyment of which all weariness is forgotten. After the dancing is over they return to work with new zest. The delight in dancing is so great that all the efforts of the Kirk to put down 'promiscuous dancing' have been failures.[2]

[1] *Lippincott's Magazine*, 1884.

[2] Logan, *The Scot Gael.*

The Scots love music. The practice of music and poetry was the favourite amusement of the Gael ; and if we look at the beauties of Scottish scenery, if we remember the glorious deeds of Scotsmen, if we learn to understand the land of liberty, of bards, of songs, of hills and lochs, the home of Ossian, of Ramsay, of Burns and Scott, we shall also understand what gives an endless inspiration to poetry and music ; and in a land where both these arts are strongly developed, dancing is not wanting. The Scots dance much ; they dance naturally and without tuition, though it is said there was once a gymnasium at Lochaber 'for teaching all sorts of athletic exercises and graceful accomplishments,' and I am sure that dancing must have been one of these. But though the Scots are always dancing, accounts of early Scottish dances are invariably meagre ; they all, however, speak of the early dances in tones of high commendation. We know the names of many dances, for in the ballad of 'Colkelbie Sow' twenty native dances are mentioned. The reason of this poverty of description is that the Scots, while practising the musical arts, had not yet reached such a height of civilisation as to pen treatises on any of the arts, dancing among them ; and then came the times of John Knox, when dancing was looked on as a sin, and only spoken of to be inveighed against.

A poem which throws much light on the manners and rustic festivities of the Scottish peasantry during a very early period is one just mentioned—the 'Cowkelbie Sow' or 'Colkelbie,' which, though posterior to Chaucer, seems to have been written during the era of minstrelsy,[1] and may probably be assigned to some time previous to the middle of the fifteenth century. From the minuteness of the description it is highly illustrative of the music, dances, and musical instruments in use in Scotland in that century ; the greater proportion of the airs, dances (of which there are about twenty), and songs enumerated in it are otherwise unknown.

Mumming and masquerading were carried to a great height

[1] *Ancient Popular Poetry of Scotland.*

in the noble festivals of the thirteenth century: at the marriage feast of Alexander III., while the mirth was at its height, a ghost appeared among the dancers wearing the form of a corpse whose flesh had departed from the bones and who seemed to glide along rather than touch the ground[1]—a manifestation which should have afforded a good text for a sermon against the practice of such frivolities. Masques and dancing had been general in Scotland from the days of James I. The poet Dunbar represents himself as dancing in the Queen's chamber:

> Than cam in Dunbar the mackar;
> On all the flure their was nane frackar,
> And thair he dauncet the Dirry-duntoun:
> He hoped lyk a piller wantoun;
> For luff of Musgraeffe men fulis me;
> He trippet quhill he tuir his pantoun.
> A mirrear dance micht na man see.

At the celebration of the nuptials of James IV. and the Lady Margaret a company of English comedians, under the management of John English, regaled the Court with a dramatic representation:[2]—'After dinnar,' says John Younge, 'a moralite was played by the said Master Inglishe and his companions, in the presence of the Kyng and Qwene, and then daunces war daunced.' But during the regency of Mary of Guise and the reign of Mary Queen of Scots, when masques became more and more splendid and extravagant, and when the Queen pirouetted in newly introduced French dances which were anything but models of decorum, no wonder the more sober-minded were disgusted, and all amusement of the kind was brought into disrepute. If we remember that to Scotsmen the fate of their country was a matter of grim and deadly earnest, we must see that the very fact that it was Mary who had introduced new French dance-measures would send men on to the side of the Reformers in this matter. A Court masque was the accompaniment of Darnley's murder, probably arranged as one of the episodes of that tragedy. She could

[1] *History of the Scottish People.* [2] D. Irving, *Lives of Scottish Poets.*

dance when her people were weeping. When the news of the massacre of the Protestants at Vassy reached Edinburgh she continued a ball at Holyrood. We cannot be surprised, therefore, that the Scotch Reformers considered 'promiscuous dancing' as a violation of all moral and spiritual laws. John Knox was bold enough to denounce the Queen on the Sunday after the ball, and to declare that she was 'dancing like the Philistines for the pleasure taken in the destruction of God's people.' The Reformation threw a temporary gloom over all the amusements of ordinary life ; and, besides dancing, sports and all kinds of pastimes were stamped as contrary to religion and not compatible with a sober and honest life. In 1599 the Kirk session of St. Andrews dealt with David Wemyss in Raderny for being present at a dance. He justified his action by saying that 'he never saw dancing was stayit [stopped] before, and that the custom was kept at Raderny before any of the session was born.' He was imprisoned in the church steeple for contumacy.[1] His crime was made all the greater through having been perpetrated on Sunday.

Before the Reformation, only the hours of Divine service were held sacred, and the rest of the day could be spent in sports if the people so chose, as was the custom in England ; but under the Reformed Church the whole day, beginning at six on the Saturday evening and lasting till the same hour next evening, was to be strictly observed. In May 1594 the Presbytery of Glasgow forbade a piper to play his pipes on Sunday 'frae the sun rising till the sun goes to ;' in Lanark, six persons, including a piper, were arraigned in 1625 'for fetching hame a Maypole, and dancing about the same upon Pasche Sunday.' In the games declared 'lawful to be observed' set forth in King James's 'Book of Sports' in 1618, dancing is named ; this is perhaps tight-rope dancing, to which the King and his Court were driven in 1600, in the absence of plays and theatres. In that year a performance took place at Falkland of 'strange and incredible practices upon a rope stretched along the palace

[1] Rogers, *Social Life of Scotland.*

close.' The dancer was a Frenchman, and James was so grateful to him that he awarded him a pension of 333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* On August 21, 1628, the Presbytery of Lanark condemned 'the insolence of men and women in foot-racing, *dancing*, and playing Barla Breks on the Sunday,' and enjoined the brethren severally to restrain the practices. In 1649 the General Assembly 'inhibited dancing,' and referred 'the censorship therefore to the care and diligence of Presbyters.' But these laws—the necessity for passing which seems strange to us—could not wholly suppress dancing, and perhaps they were carried out generally with the tolerance and humanity which characterised the treatment of the Roman Catholics in spite of the harsh laws which were promulgated against them. We must remember that dancing and sports of all kinds had very much obscured the original significance of religious ceremonies, and the Puritans were but endeavouring to return to the simplicity of ancient times when they sought to curtail somewhat the amusements of the people. About a century later a change was beginning to appear. In 1723 a weekly dancing assembly was established in Edinburgh and was largely patronised; and in 1728 the Town Council of Glasgow—where we have seen the playing of pipes interdicted on a Sunday—appointed a dancing-master, with a salary of 20*l.*, 'to familiarise the inhabitants with the art.' At St. Andrews in 1765 a master was appointed at a salary of 5*l.* to teach dancing, 'a very necessary article of education,' and another was nominated in Aberdeen to teach 'manners and good breeding.' In 1768 the Rev. John Mill includes 'dancing and Church music' among the things necessary for a gentleman's education. Though May-Day sports have ceased, yet the national games, including bagpipe competitions and Highland dancing, are conducted on the annual holidays and at the national gatherings. Among the more remarkable of these gatherings for the practice of public sports are the 'Northern Meeting' at Inverness and the great annual 'Gathering' at Braemar. In 1863, however, a farmer at North Knapdale was refused Church membership, since, by dancing

on some occasion, he was held to have been chargeable with 'scandal, flagrant inconsistency, and bitter provocation against the Lord.' [1]

We may perhaps sum up the countenance given to dancing at the present day by saying that in the country and among the more stern members of the Calvinistic body dancing is considered a sin, whilst in the towns, and in many country places too, the Scotsman's natural aptitude for the dance breaks out, and dancing is a favourite sport. Scott has preserved an example of the first temper in his character of David Deans in 'The Heart of Midlothian.' Jeanie was shocked at Effie thinking of a dance, and then their father suddenly appeared, having heard the word *dance*. 'Dance!' he exclaimed, 'dance, said ye? I daur ye, limmers that ye are, to name such a word at my door-cheek.' And of the other temperament, the merry mind that sees no harm in such amusements, he has given us a passage in 'Marmion:'

> Nor failed old Scotland to produce
> At such high tide the savoury goose.
> Then came the merry *masquers* in,
> And carols roared with blithesome din;
> If unmelodious was the song,
> It was a hearty note and strong.
> Who lists may in their mumming see
> Traces of ancient mystery.

Dancing at weddings was a very usual custom in Scotland, and on these occasions it was especially objected to by the Reformers. At one time the clergy did not think it inappropriate to take part in sports, and perhaps it was as a concession to the worthies that sacred hymns were used, even up to the beginning of this century, as an accompaniment of grave dances at weddings and other feasts. In the eighteenth century dancing took place on the green when weather permitted. The first reel was danced by the newly-married pair; next on the floor were the bride's maidens and her male body-

[1] Rogers, *Social Life of Scotland.*



THE PENNY WEDDING

guard.[1] At one point of the proceedings the company danced with flambeaux and formed a circle, the preparation for a six-some reel, after which each guest put a piece of silver in the hand of the musician, who would probably be a piper, with a piece of the bride's garter tied about his pipes. This took place at the bride's house, and the first reel was called *shemit*, from the supposed bashfulness of the young couple. When all had danced, the company had supper, and afterwards the young people resumed the dance. The concluding diversion was a dance called 'Bab at the Bowster,' practically the same as the 'Cushion Dance,' already described among Elizabethan dances. Dancing was kept up until the small hours by some of the company, but before then the young couple had been escorted home.[2]

Penny weddings were nuptial entertainments of the lower classes in Scotland, at which each guest contributed a sum from 1*s.* to 5*s.* with the purpose of defraying the cost of the festival, and to give the newly-wedded pair a start in life. In some fishing villages this practice is still continued.

It seems but a sad journey from the wedding to the death-bed, but extremes meet ; on the night after a death in Scotland, dancing was kept up until the next morning, just as it is at a wedding. Dr. Garnett says that in Argyllshire funeral dances are still customary. They begin on the evening of the death, and are then termed the *Latewakes*. All the neighbourhood are summoned to attend, and the dance is accompanied by a solemn melancholy strain, called the Lament, begun by the nearest relative. The Highland custom of expressing sorrow was 'the lamentation and clapping of hands by women.' Women were not excluded from these dances and celebrations, as from some others. If the dead person were a man, his widow (if he left one) led the first dance ; if the deceased was a woman, the widower began the measure. At large and important wakes, a banquet was held the night before the funeral, and the proceed-

[1] Rogers, *Social Life of Scotland.*
[2] David Maxwell, *Bygone Scotland.*

ings terminated with dancing and a festival called 'dargies' or 'dirges,' probably the lamentations mentioned above; sometimes the wake lasts two or three weeks.

Mr. J. G. Frazer gives the following account in the 'Folk Lore Journal,' 1883:—'About a hundred years ago a young man attending a funeral was told that after the funeral there was a dance, and that he was to dance with the widow. He was to ask her to name the tune. Her answer was, "It would need to be a merry one, for my heart is very sair." She appeared in full weeds, and the guests were arranged for a country-dance. She and her partner stood at the top of the dance, went down the middle hand-in-hand and out at the door of the room. The dancing was continued by the other guests. This was thought to show honour to the deceased.'[1]

But the Scots had many other dancing customs; for instance, in the fifteenth century we find that at fairs, after the buying and selling was over, much fun and frolic took place. The whole company betook themselves to dancing, the chief part of which is called the *Salmon Dance*, a dance which consists in endeavouring to imitate the leaps of the fish after which it is named. At the close, the bagpiper, who had been playing for half a day, demanded the modest sum of three halfpence as his fee.

Another popular exhibition of the fifteenth century was *Morris-dancing*, an account of which has been given elsewhere. The dancer wore a rich comic dress, made of fawn-coloured silk in form of a tunic, with trappings of green and red satin, adorned with bells, and hose half black and half white. Though the dance was of a leaping and frolicsome character, it required much taste and skill in the execution in order to produce a tune from the two hundred and fifty-two bells, merely by movements of the body. The dance was usually performed in Scotland on Shrove Tuesday (sports on May-day, the festival

[1] Mr. Thomas Davidson says that until seventy or eighty years ago it was the custom in Galloway to dance at funerals.

on which this dance is performed in England, having ceased), and the dancers were sometimes accompanied by a Moorish or black drummer. Royalty looked on at these revels; both James IV. and James V. contributed money for their support, and themselves took part in the dances of the period.[1] Another favourite dance was the 'Pavin,' probably introduced from Spain through France; French styles of dances predominated at the Court, on account of the close connection between the reigning houses of France and Scotland. The dances of the common people were simple and vigorous enough—a usual dance among them was called 'Flat-foot,' of which we only know the name—but they too were smitten after a time with foreign innovations. Thus merry-makers at 'Christ's Kirk on the Green,' after their national reels, betake themselves to 'counterfeiting France' by passing to the fashionable dances then in vogue at Court.

Some of the games of Scottish children seem to have been dances originally. For example, the *Merry-ma-tanzie* is probably a corruption of Merry-May-dance, an old sport practised on the first of May. Part of the song sung during the dance was, 'Here we go round the mulberry bush.'[2] Mrs. Gomme gives a full description of this game.

Some of the dances in use in Scotland are mentioned in a work contemporary with the 'Complaynt of Scotland'—'The Boke named the Governour, deuised by Sir Thomas Elyot, knyght, London 1546'—where the writer enumerates the ancient dances, Eumelia, Cordax, Enoplie, and Hormus, and then adds: 'In stede of these we have now Base daunses, bargenethes, pauyons, turgions and roundes.' We find some of these names recurring in a list of Scottish dances given in the 'Complaynt of Scotland:'

The dances consisted of dancing 'in ane ring,' licht lopene (leaping), galmonding (gambolling), stendling (striding) backuart and forduart; dans and base dansin, paureans, galzardis, turdions, braulis, and branglis, buffons, with mony othir licht dancis.

[1] *History of the Scottish People.* [2] *Popular Rhymes of Scotland.*

One may suitably begin a more particular account of Scottish dances by a description of the step peculiar to the Highlands, and known as the 'Highland Fling,' the name being often transferred to the dance itself, which is usually performed by three or four persons to the music of the Strathspey, which will be described later. The term 'fling' expresses the kick which characterises the step. When a horse kicks by merely



Scottish Reel
(*From an Etching by D. Deuchar*, 1784)

raising one leg and striking with it, he is said 'in grooms' parlance' to 'fling like a cow.' This is what the Highland dancer does; he dances on each leg alternately, and *flings* the other one in front and behind.[1]

Among Scottish dances the first place must of necessity be given to the *Reel*, which after the Restoration was danced with much agility by high-born dames, who had fallen from the good habits of domestic industry practised by them after

[1] Grove's *Dictionary of Music.*

the Reformation into bad ways of gambling, loose talk, and profane dancing. The Scots dance their reels for the reel's sake ; the dance is not with them a simple excuse for a social gathering, or a means for a flirtation. The Scot arrives on the dance floor as he would on the drill square, and he dances until he is tired out, rarely looking at his lady partner (if he has one), and in fact caring not at all with whom he dances.

The reel is by some declared to be of Celtic origin, and possibly indigenous to Britain ; but it is the Danish as well as the Scottish national dance, and to which country it originally belonged is not easy to say. It is very interesting to notice that the pentatonic scale is employed in Scottish music, and in that of some Asiatic nations also, and the principal instruments of the Scots—the harp and the bagpipe—are both found in Central Asia. Hindoos evince a decided preference for Scottish music above all others, and this seems to hint at some Eastern origin for the dance. An article in the 'Times' of November 1864 says: 'When the pipers of the 93rd Highlanders were ordered to play before six hundred proud Hindoo kings and chieftains, glittering with emeralds and diamonds, the gratification of Her Majesty's princely subjects was complete, and their delight knew no bounds.'

The figure of the reel is perhaps the most beautiful that can be exhibited. Hogarth exemplifies it as the Line of Beauty, and the general air of the dance should indicate gaiety and good-will. It is a gliding dance, usually performed by two couples, and its movements differ slightly according to locality, the principal point, which is the same in all, being the circular form. When performed by two couples it is called a 'foursome reel ;' when by three couples, a 'sixsome reel,' the difference being in the music, with a corresponding difference in the steps and evolutions. But it must be noticed that the Gael did not depend on the playing of some instrument to accompany his dances, but often 'reeled' to his own vocal music. It is advisable to dance a reel as much as possible on the points of one's toes, in order to maintain complete command over foot

and ankle, and the performer is thus enabled to raise and lower himself according to the expression of the music, with perfect ease and address.

The Strathspey derives its name from the valley of the Spey; it is closely allied to the reel; it is slower, yet it calls for more exertion, and abounds in quick motions. Burns compares some of the finest lines of poetry to the old strathspeys. Neil Gow and his sons are indissolubly associated with the reels and strathspeys: 'he was one of Nature's own musicians, and did much to promote the use of the violin in playing Scotch dance music.' The Reel of Tulloch is one of the most characteristic of these dance tunes. To show how these reels have become as it were part of a Scotsman's own being, so that he performs them instinctively and without thought, it is recorded that a man played the fiddle, played bass on the bagpipe, smoked, spoke Gaelic and explained it by means of question and answer, all the while he was dancing a strathspey!

To dance a reel was at one time believed to be one of the signs of witchcraft, as appears from the following passage:

> Agnis Tompson brought before the King confessed to going with a number of witches, two hundred, by sea, drinking by the way, to the Church of North Barrick in Lowthian, where they landed, tooke hands, and danced this *reill* or short daunce, singing with one voice:
>
> Commer goe ye before, commer goe ye,
> Gif ye will not goe before, commer let me.

This 'reill' was played upon a small trumpet called a Jew's-harp.[1]

These dances, reels, and strathspeys are the only true national dances of Scotland, others having been derived from France or England, and as such they deserve particular attention. Some details as to the music taken from the 'Collection of Highland Airs,' published in 1781 by the Rev. Patrick McDonald, may be interesting in this connection. The tunes are sung irregularly, dwelling upon the long and pathetic notes,

[1] Douce, *Illustrations of Shakespeare.*

with no apparent idea of musical time. Many airs have unfortunately been lost, having been written originally for the harp, which has not been used in Scotland for over two centuries, and not being adapted to the bagpipe. Some, however, are sung when a number of people are assembled either for work or recreation, and, being short and tuneful, have been easily remembered and preserved. 'Many of them are chorus songs. Particular parts of the tune are allotted to the principal singer, who expresses the significant words; the other parts are sung in chorus by the whole company present.' In St. Kilda, dances are held to celebrate the close of the fishing season; they have also many rough Highland reels, which they accompany on the trump or Jew's-harp, and the notes of which seem sometimes to have been borrowed from sea-birds' cries. In many parts of Scotland the violin has now taken the place of the bagpipe for the playing of reels and strathspeys. Francis Peacock, an eminent dancing-master of Aberdeen, who died in 1807, has written a good account of the steps of the reel as then danced. He begins by saying that men of position, owning their own carriage, went to Edinburgh from London on purpose to learn this dance, which must have been some use to them in London, or they would never have undertaken the journey. He then proceeds to describe the music and the steps. The tunes are 'divided into two parts, each consisting of four bars, which severally contain four crotchets or eight quavers;' and these notes are 'alternately a dotted quaver and a semi-quaver; the bar frequently terminating in a crotchet.' This time corresponds to the measure of the heroic stanzas of Ossian, a coincidence worthy of remark, and the following lines from Gray are an example of it:—

> Haste, ye sister pow'rs of song,
> Hasten from the shady grove,
> Where the river rolls along,
> Sweetly to the voice of love.

The steps are called minor, single and double where two steps go to one bar, one step to one bar, and one step to two

bars, respectively. Some of the steps may be briefly described as follows :—*Forward step* (the common step for the *promenade* or figure of the reel) : advance one foot, bring the other up behind, hop with the first foot, and repeat reversing the feet ; turn the body to the left when dancing with the right foot, and to the right when using the left. The *setting or footing step*, frequent in English country dances : bring one foot up behind the other, and sink or hop on it—this is a *minor* step ; the *single* is, pass the right foot behind the left, make gentle spring with the left to the second position, pass the right foot again behind the left, making a hop on it, and repeat with alternate feet. In the *double* step you pass the one foot four times behind the other. *Cross springs* : spring forward on the right foot and hop with the left, then spring back with the right and hop on it. *Cross slips* : slip right before left, left behind right, right before left and hop upon it. *Cross passes* : spring to one side with right foot, pass the left across it, hop and cross it again ; then reverse to the other side. *A minor step*, or *leaping step* : spring to one side and bring other foot behind the first one, then make a caper or leap, changing the positions of the feet, and repeat. *Open step* : slip the feet to the second position, then with straight knees make a smart spring upon the toes to the fifth position, and repeat. *Turning step* : go to second position with right foot, hop on it and pass the left foot behind, then hop and pass the same foot before. These steps can of course be combined and repeated in an endless variety of ways, according to the music or the taste and ingenuity of the dancer ; and if the reader will carefully study the above directions, he will in time acquire some notion of the fascinating Scottish reel, and will be the better able to understand the evolutions should he have the good fortune to see it well performed.

I have already mentioned that the witches' dance was a 'reill or short dance' to the tune of 'Commer goe ye,' and whoever desires a good description of some such witches' dance cannot do better than read 'Tam o' Shanter.' But it was not only witches who danced : his Satanic majesty himself would

often join the revel. It was a Scottish superstition that Satan, when he so desired, could hold communication with men, and that he would meet them at nocturnal dances to receive homage. The dances then performed were probably reels; they were circular at any rate, and to avoid recognition the performers danced so that their backs formed the inner circumference. Witches, when brought to trial, would confess their dealings with the Powers of Darkness: one said she had been at a meeting 'at the Westwood Head, where there was dancing and mirth.' Another met 'Satan as a little black man and other witches and they daunced together.' On one occasion at the Mill Green, Dalkeith, while all danced together, Satan was in human shape 'with black clothes, and a black hatt upon his head.' Janet Ker danced 'with the devill and with other notorious witches,' some of whom were among the convicts of the time, from 1661 to 1678. Dancing with Satan is included amongst the charges against one John Douglas and nine women of Tranent, when Douglas was piper. Satan not infrequently inspired pipers; one was called the Devil's Own Piper, for once Satan had taught him to sing and dance a free ditty, and within two days it was heard in all the streets of the town. Moreover, his Majesty himself is said to have officiated as piper at a dance in the Pentland Hills, in the semblance of a rough tawny dog. A chapter on 'Nocturnal Dancing of Elves,' by Olaus Magnus, is embellished by figures of demons back to back in a circular dance, one leading a proselyte by the hand, while he conducts the proceedings as piper, and another individual performs on the guitar. Though dancing with instruments and music always formed part of the Scottish Satanic conventions, we have little description of the dances used beyond the meagre sentence, 'Gelie Duncan playit on ane trump, and Johnne Fiene, Missellit, led the ring.'[1] As there is a natural association of ideas in connection with mystical rites, with witchcraft and with intercourse with the devil, no wonder that the clergy denounced it, and that, especially among uneducated

[1] Dalyell, *Superstitions of Scotland.*

minds, it was hard to separate innocent from harmful dancing, so that dancing in general fell into disrepute.

Circular dances are found among nearly all nations. In Scotland the *Ring Dance* was once a favourite, though it has now fallen into disuse; it is similar to the Irish Rinceadhfada, or Rinkey, which is also a field dance. Leyden says of this dance:

> It was the common dance at the Kirn, or feast of cutting down the grain, and was always danced with peculiar glee by the reapers of that farm where the harvest was first finished in any district. On such occasions they danced on an eminence, in the view of the reapers in their vicinity, to the music of the Lowland bagpipe, commencing the dance with three loud shouts of triumph, and thrice tossing up their hooks in the air. The intervals of labour during harvest were often occupied by dancing the Ring, to the music of the piper who formerly attended the reapers.

This dance is alluded to in the 'Elegy on the Piper of Kilbarchan:'

> Or quha will cause our shearers shear?
> Wha will bend up the brags of weir?

The Highlanders still retain this dance, and dance it in the open fields when they visit the South of Scotland as reapers in autumn.[1] The *Ringmor*, in which the dancer seemed to touch the ground with his thighs without losing his balance, is perhaps one of the actions of these dances. It reminds us of 'the Lusitani,' who, according to Diodorus, 'have a light and airy dance in time of peace, which requires great dexterity and nimbleness of legs and thighs; in war, they march along, keeping good time, and sing triumphal songs when they are ready to charge the enemy.'[2]

The *Sword Dance*, common to so many nations, must have originally preceded the march out to war, or was, perhaps, danced on the field of battle itself to rouse the courage of the combatants. Perhaps, also, the barbaric yells referred to in Bon Gaultier's amusing ballad were a frequent accompaniment

[1] Murray, *The Complaynt of Scotland.* [2] Logan, *The Scot. Gael.*

of the fight, or were used to inspire the flagging zeal of the fighters :—

> So Mhic Mac Methuselah
> Gave some warlike howls,
> Trew his skhian-dhu
> An stuck it in his powels.

The dance is descended from the Pyrrhica Saltatio of the Romans, the military dance of their Salii or Priests of Mars, and their dance in its turn probably came from the Greeks.[1] It has long been practised among the Highlanders under the name of *Killie-Kallum* (or Ghillie-Callum). According to Olaus Magnus, it travelled from Orkney and Shetland to Norway, where it became very popular. Tacitus mentions it among the ancient Germans, who danced unclad amidst drawn swords and spears with great dexterity and grace.[2] A century ago it was still practised in North Germany. In the Far East, too, we find it : it is common in Tibet, and among Bedouin tribes in Syria. There the wife of the sheik stands alone in the middle swinging a sabre rapidly round and round in her hand ; from time to time one or another of the men darts forward and pretends to seize her by the hem of her dress. If the woman is awkward, and the man not very agile, a hand or finger is cut off ; though these accidents occur frequently, the people are very fond of the amusement. This is very different from the sword dance of the Goths and Swedes described by Olaus Magnus, the latter dance being much more elaborate and not so dangerous.

Henry's 'History of Britain' (1771) asserts that the Germans, and probably also the Gauls and Britons, had a kind of martial dance which was exhibited at every entertainment. This was performed by certain young men who, by long practice, had acquired the art of dancing among the sharp points of swords and spears with such wonderful agility and gracefulness that they gained great applause to themselves and gave

[1] Soane, *New Curiosities of Literature.*
[2] Rogers, *Social Life of Scotland.*

great delight to the spectators. Moresin speaks of a similar dance in Scotland without the swords, a kind of Sicinnium, performed at Christmas to the accompaniment of songs sung by the dancers.[1] There is still a tune known as the 'Perth Glovers' March,' said to have been heard in 1559; and if this is genuine, it may be looked upon as the oldest dance music in Scotland. When Charles I. was in Perth, in July 1633, he was entertained by a sword dance performed by thirteen of the company of Glovers, perhaps to the tune named above; they wore green caps and silver strings and ribbons, and white shoes with bells about their legs, so it was, perhaps, a kind of Morris dance. At any rate, they danced with many difficult knots and 'alla fallagessa.' The sword dance was also exhibited before the Queen in Perthshire. The *Dirk Dance*, or Ghillie-Callum (the latter name being taken from the tune to which the dance is performed), sometimes terminates a ball, but is supposed to bear only a very faint resemblance to the ancient sword dance. It is still executed by a few, and was exhibited in London in 1831 by MacGlassan; but those whose memory goes back into remote times—the oldest inhabitant in fact—tell us that the modern dirk dance is unlike that of their youth. It is evident from an old Isle of Skye dancing song that the parties in the old dance went through the evolutions of attack and defence, while the chief art of the modern dance is the dexterity with which the dancer escapes touching one or more swords crossed on the ground.[2] Some authorities derive the Scottish sword dance from the Scandinavian dances, instead of *vice versâ*. The rhymes connected with the dance have fortunately been preserved in a succession of copies, the last of which was written about 1788 by Mr. William Henderson, younger, of Papa Stour, one of the Shetland Islands, where the dance or ballet is still performed.[3] This document is given by Sir Walter Scott amongst the notes which he has appended to the novel of 'The Pirate.'

We find that the *Hornpipe* was not confined to England;

[1] Bourne's *Popular Antiquities.* [2] Logan, *The Scot. Gael.*
[3] *Traditions of Edinburgh.*

it was a fashionable Scottish measure about the year 1740, and was danced to the tune called 'Flowers of Edinburgh'—a name probably given to it out of compliment to the young ladies of the Scottish metropolis, who were then attending the dancing schools.[1] *Sean-trius*, now called chantreuse or old trousers, named from the accompanying air, is the native Highland Hornpipe, and is danced with much grace. It was notably performed by two brothers of the name of Grant, who were good violin-players and very clever dancers. They also gave the Highland Fling in the style called the Marquis of Huntley's.[2]



Scottish Reel
(From an Engraving after J. H. Ramberg, circa 1800)

The song 'Highland Laddie' (which bears out Stenhouse in his view in opposition to Burns's assertion that 'all Scottish muses were Jacobites') may not be inappropriately referred to in this connection. Its references to dancing would all be well understood and keenly enjoyed by the audience to whom it was addressed :

When you came over first frae France,
Bonny laddie, Highland laddie,
You swore to lead our King a dance,
Bonny laddie, Highland laddie ;

[1] Stenhouse. [2] Logan, *The Scot. Gael.*

And promised on your royal word,
Bonny laddie, Highland laddie,
To make the Duke dance o'er the sword,
Bonny laddie, Highland laddie.

In all the foregoing remarks the reader will have noticed what a hold the national dances have over the Scottish mind and heart. At some periods, from various causes connected with the history of the country, foreign measures may have held sway, but the true Scot will always turn to his own dances in preference to those of foreign importation. Most true is it that—

Nae cotillon brent new frae France,
But hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys and reels
Put life and mettle in their heels.

But with all that—and herein lies the root of the difference between the people of Scotland and those of England, Ireland, and most of Europe—the Scot, more especially the Lowland Scot, is always self-contained. In spite of the great activity of the reel, there is always present an element of restraint. You do not expect, nor do you find, that the dance overflows into any exuberant expression of the dancer's feelings by means of any unexpected gesture or movement, unless it is that he cracks his knuckles and utters cries, as is so often the case in the dances of the more voluble Southern nations. Every step in his dance is guided by some conventional rule.

Such numerous and excellent collections of Scottish dance music have been published recently that no musical examples of dance tunes need be given in this chapter.

IRELAND

In Ireland, the people of which country possess, or at any rate possessed formerly, a reputation for gaiety and humour, one naturally expects to find that dancing flourishes and is a favourite national amusement. And this is so to a great extent, though they have not, perhaps, such a variety of popular measures as other countries. It has been said that if

the girls of Dublin did not indulge in dancing—which, however, they are not slow to do—they would become cripples, for it is not the fashion to walk in Dublin, probably owing to the badly-paved streets, which make walking unpleasant. Few meetings for any purpose take place in Ireland without the dance being called for; at the fair you are sure to come across some youths dancing a 'break down,' with many accompanying 'whoops,' and much brandishing of blackthorn or 'shillelagh.' We have had a description of wakes in our Scotch division, and have seen how important a part dancing formed at those celebrations. An Irish wake is a most characteristic function, with its jigs and dirges and whisky-drinking. At an 'assembly' held at Cashel in the eighteenth century, dancing was celebrated with much mirth to the tune of 'Rock of Cashel,' and the false step of any one dancer was at once noticed and made the subject of merriment. It is said that four sentinels with fixed bayonets endeavoured to keep the door, yet a lively mob rushed in, determined to join the dance. It was no unusual thing at such meetings for young men inspired by their sweethearts to dance away the night accompanied by the 'melodious pleasing' of a bagpipe.[1] For though the bagpipe is always considered to be the national Scottish instrument, yet it belongs to Ireland also, and is often mentioned in ancient Irish poems of between the sixth and tenth centuries. The large bagpipe, of the same kind as the Scottish one, and said to be the ancient one, is also in use, and in the fifteenth century it was the proper accompaniment of military music. The modern Irish bagpipe has the sweetest sound of all instruments of this description. But the harp is really the Irish national instrument, and the Irish attained great skill as players of it. It is said that they taught their art to the Scots, and then the pupils surpassed their masters; Irish and Scottish harpists of the fifteenth century were unrivalled.

Before proceeding to a detailed account of the jig, which naturally holds a principal place among the dances of Ireland,

[1] *Survey of the South of Ireland.*

we must mention one or two others, which are interesting as being very ancient, and also connected with similar dances in other countries.

Circular Dances reappear in nearly every country from the earliest times. May Day is still celebrated in many parts of Ireland with a circular serpent dance round a tree, which dance has been handed down from generation to generation from the remotest antiquity. The performers dance round a tree or bonfire, moving in curves from right to left, as if imitating the windings of a serpent, though they are quite unconscious of the cryptic meaning of the movement, which is in reality one of the earliest traditions of humanity concerning the serpent and the tree.[1] A circular dance performed as a religious rite is termed *rinke teampuill*, i.e. chorea templi, and has some similar features to the last one. The ceremonies concluded with a dance from right to left, but should the signs be unpropitious, or should anything have been done wrong so as to violate the rite, the priests blew a horn as a curse, and the dance was performed from left to right; these directions remind us of the Roman superstition that the left hand is the unlucky one. A strange instance of circular dancing is given in the following story from Kilkenny.[2] During a pestilence which visited the town, the deceased were carried to St. Maula's Churchyard, bound with withes to the bier. When the plague was over, women and children repaired to the churchyard to dance either by way of thanksgiving, or merely for joy at their deliverance. But 'having taken the same withes, instead of napkins and handkerchiefs, to keep them together in the round,' they took the infection of the plague and the pestilence recommenced with renewed virulence. One would like to know in this connection if the dance was performed with due observance of the direction right to left; for if not, one can imagine that the superstitious might attribute the spread of infection to the malice of the powers of evil, who had been offended by the non-observance of this mystic rite. The dance employed

[1] Wilde. [2] Dalyell.

on this occasion may have been the same as the Rinceadhfada or Field Dance, which also possesses the feature of the use of handkerchiefs to connect the dancers. It was performed thus :—three persons abreast, holding the ends of white handkerchiefs, moved forward a few paces to the sound of slow music, the rest of the dancers following in couples, also holding white handkerchiefs between them. The music then changed to a quicker time, and the dance proper began, the performers passing successively under the handkerchiefs of the three in front; then, wheeling round in semicircles, they formed a variety of figures, interspersed with occasional *entrechats* (that is, a *cross caper* or leap, changing the position of the feet, according to Mr. Peacock), finally uniting and resuming their original places. This dance was accompanied by the Cuisley Ciuil, a sort of simple bagpipe, and used to conclude balls ; it was performed before James II. when he landed at Kinsale, to his great gratification.[1]

Another very ancient dance belonging to the twelfth century, which comes under the same category, is a hopping dance known as the *Espringall*, corresponding to the German 'Springendetantz ;' it is a dance-song (Fer-Cengail) and is mentioned in the 'Roman de la Violette' along with the Carol. One person sang the melody, and the dancer or dancers joined in the chorus. The Carols were always danced by several persons who held each other's hands and moved in a circle, as in the above-mentioned circular dances. The Irish Cengail seems to be cognate with the old French verb, *ginguer*, 'to move the feet,' and the refrain of this dance-song was perhaps like that of the 'Fer Gigaoila,' which consisted of a humorous kind of giggling, in short catches of the breath, accompanied by sudden starts of the body.[2]

I may perhaps surprise my readers by saying that the first English dance-tune, which dates back to the year 1300, was probably a kind of *Jig*, though it did not lack grace. In fact, though jigs are now confined to Ireland, they were

[1] Logan. [2] O'Curry.

formerly equally common in England and Scotland; possibly they were only used for relaxation and not on state occasions, but they were danced at Court until the Crown passed to the house of Hanover, and there are jigs named after every sovereign from Charles II. to Queen Anne.[1] We have seen, in the account of English dances, how the learned gentlemen of the law were wont to disport themselves in the dance, which was probably some kind of jig, as we find jigs with the names of the Inner Temple, the Middle Temple, Lincoln's Inn, and Gray's Inn. Playford in the preface to the 'Dancing Master' speaks of 'the sweet and airy activity of the gentlemen of the Inns of Court which has crowned their grand solemnities with admiration to all spectators;' this sentence is included in all the editions of the work up to that of 1701, but omitted after 1703, so we may infer that the practice had then ceased entirely, or at any rate was not so common as it had been before. There was also a jig called 'Old Noll's Jig,' a name given perhaps in contempt, showing that the dance was rather despised, or else it was bestowed on the dance by some wag; for assuredly, though Cromwell delighted in music, we cannot picture him to our minds jigging it merrily. Some derive the word from the Italian *Giga*, or from the German word *Geige*, an early kind of fiddle, but the derivation does not help us to find out what the dance was like, as the British dance did not possess any very decided characteristics, and the word came to be synonymous with any trivial thing. Pope, for instance, says: 'Make the soul dance upon a jig to Heaven.'

It is not easy now to say in what the ancient jig consisted: in Shakespeare's time it meant not only a dance, but a humorous piece of writing, probably in verse. *Frottola* is defined in Florio's Italian Dictionary as 'a countrie jigg, or round, or country song, or wanton verses:' as if all these terms were included in the word jigg.[2] During the earlier period of the English stage, a jig, accompanied by dancing and playing, was the common termination to a play, and was either spoken or sung

[1] Grove's *Dictionary*. [2] Reed's *Shakespeare*.

by the Clown ; but it was not advertised in the play-bills, nor performed unless 'called for' by the audience. These jigs varied in length, from the 'sixpenny jig' mentioned in 'Pills to Purge Melancholy' (1600) down to the 'half-penny jig,' which perhaps was only a ballad. That there was singing in them appears certain ; in Henry Chettle's 'Kind-hearted Dream' (1592) it is said that the players 'spoiled their trade by *singing jigs*.' Gisson, in his 'Plays Confuted in Five Actions,' speaks of the 'dancing of jigs,' and in old pictures Tarleton is represented with his tabor, playing jigs : we find jig music still preserved bearing his name. Shirley tells us in his 'Changes' (1632) that jigs at the end of plays had been given up at Salisbury Court, and perhaps also at the private theatres. In Marston's 'Scourge of Villanie' 'Kemp's Jig' is spoken of, not as a song or ballad, but as a dance :

> A hall ! a hall !
> Roome for the spheres ; the orbes celestial
> Will *daunce* Kempe's Jigge ![1]

Music bearing this name is still extant.

Kemp was a celebrated actor, whom we have had occasion to mention in connection with the Morris dance ; it is possible that these dances were composed by regular dramatists, and that they bore Kemp's name, simply because he had made them popular by his acting, and probably by flashes of extempore wit. He himself says that he 'spent his life in mad jigges.'[2]

Whatever may be the original meaning attached to the word jig, in Ireland it has long stood for a dance, popular among young and old, and formerly in all classes, when high and low would join in the native dance to the tune of the 'Flannel Jacket' or some such air. Nowadays its animated movements have given way, in polished society, to the dreamy but over-refined waltz, though one fails to see why it should not be revived. A traveller in Ireland in 1751 says that every village has its Bagpiper, who, every fine evening, after working hours, collects all the young men and maidens of the village about

[1] Payne Collier. [2] Kemp's *Nine Days' Wonder*.

him, and here they dance most cheerfully. Selden says that the Irish were 'wholly inclined' to a dance which he calls the 'Sprightly Phrygian.' This may have been the *Gollttraidheacht*, which was adapted to festive entertainments 'either to elevate the soul to martial action or to excite therein the more humane disposition to Love, Mirth, and Dance.'[1]

Jigs are divided into 'single' and 'double' jigs, according to the different number of beats in the bar : single jigs are further defined as having a good swinging movement. The steps are probably somewhat similar to those employed in the Scotch reel, described fully in the previous division of this chapter.

A SINGLE JIG



[1] *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards.*



In addition to these we have such terms as 'guiding,' in which in the double jig the floor is struck six times to the bar, and 'battering,' or 'single battering,' where the floor is struck only twice, once by the foot on which the body leans and once by the foot thrown forward. All military tunes and dances amongst the Irish were of the nature of jigs; they were conducted by the Curinky or dancing-master, which word survived in the surnames of many families as lately as 1831.[1] These tunes are of a lively quick-step character, the slow march being unknown, or at least unused; they were probably used both for dances and marches, and are still extensively preserved as jig-tunes. They are mostly in common time, but occasionally in six-eight measure. A harp tune written in the same six-eight time is the Planxty, which is not intended for words. This is the time most common in the ancient jig or rinnee, but this tune differs from the older ones in having less rapidity of motion, and in not being bound to an equality in the number of bars.

TATTER THE ROAD

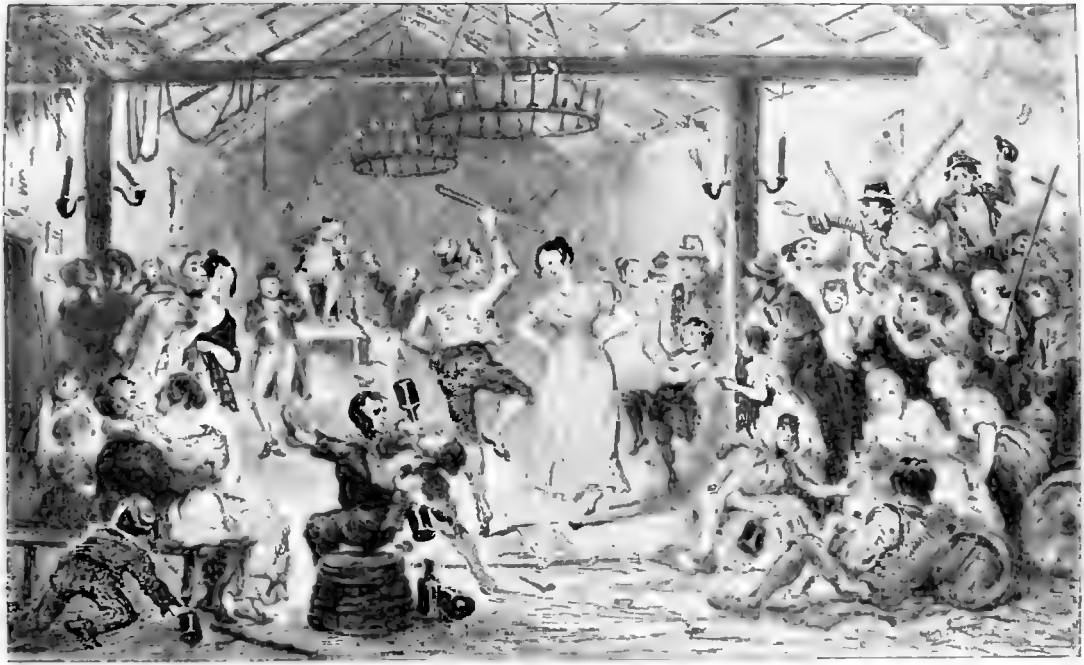


1 Logan

'Tatter-the-road' is similar to the double jig, only that in it the floor is struck four instead of six times in 'guiding,' and 'single battering' is used. It is a very ancient air, and appears to be the original form of the double jig-tune, known now by the name of the 'Washerwoman,' which under this name has been a very popular dance tune in Ireland for at least a century. Such dance tunes as 'The Hunt' are on the whole similar to the usual tunes for the double jig, hornpipe, or reel, with some slight irregularity or difference in structure. These slight differences necessitate a separate dance for each, so that each tune has its own dance, and is used for no other. A double jig, first noted in 1852, played by a fiddler from Co. Leitrim, is remarkable for the fact that it is quite unsuited to the bagpipe, for which instrument most Munster jigs were written; it must be accompanied by harp or fiddle, and is perhaps of ancient origin. The usual Munster jig belongs to the class called common or double jigs, and possesses much of the old march character.[1] One very old and popular tune of this description is known as 'Gather up the money' and is founded on the well-known vocal air called 'The Paisdin Fionn.' It is usually played by pipers or fiddlers when they desire through its name to convey a significant hint to the dancers that they think it time to receive some pecuniary reward for their services. It is also used as a lively song-tune, and was formerly much played as a 'petticotee' movement, an old dance once very fashionable which used to be performed immediately after the more stately movements of the minuet. Another very generally known and very ancient dance tune of this class is called 'Blackberry Blossom.'

'The Humours of Caledon' belongs to the kind termed Nop-jigs. It took its name from the small and beautiful place called Caledon in the barony of Dungannon, Co. Tyrone, and was found in a MS. book of Irish dance tunes during last century.

[1] Petrie.



IRISH JIG

THE HUMOURS OF CALEDON



Dances termed 'single jig' seem to have been native to Co. Galway. The above descriptions are taken from Petrie's 'Collection of the Ancient Music of Ireland.' There is probably a field of research open to the Irish student in this direction, and perhaps some day we shall see Irish dances and their tunes thoroughly investigated, when many interesting details will no doubt be brought to light.

The following account of an Irish Sabbath, taken from Miss Owenson's 'Patriotic Sketches of Ireland,' is most interesting. We may preface our quotation by observing that the avocation of dancing-master (mentioned by Miss Owenson) does not preclude the carrying on of other occupations, though it may interfere with the discharge of other duties. A carrier was once summoned to fetch some luggage, and returned the answer that he could not come, being busy teaching the jig!

Whatever hardships the Irish peasant submits to during the week, it can never be said that 'Sunday shines no Sabbath day to him.' The lower Irish, passionately fond of dress, and without the

means of gratifying their dominant passion, confine their wishes to the hard-earned suit which the mass-house or dance on Sunday affords an opportunity of displaying; and it is not unusual to behold even ornamental finery on those on Sunday who during the rest of the week were worse clothed than the poorest mendicant in England.

On a Sunday the young women go to the mass-house, generally dressed in white gowns and coloured petticoats; with their rug cloaks hanging on one arm, and their shoes and stockings on the other. When they approach the Chapel they bathe their feet in the first stream, and assume those articles of luxury which are never drawn on but for show, and the public gaze of the parish. After prayers both sexes generally adjourn to the fields to witness some of those manly sports to which the lower Irish are so passionately addicted. These national amusements are not confined to the peasantry; the young gentlemen of the adjoining counties frequently engage in them.

While the English peasant employs the hour succeeding to his attendance at Church in the perusal of some religious tract, the Irish peasant devotes himself to an exercise which may render him a less pious, but certainly forms him to be a more serviceable, member of the community.

Although the fare of Sunday seldom rises beyond the accustomed potatoes and milk of the rest of the week, some few halfpence are always spared to purchase the pleasures which the Sunday cake bestows. This cake set upon a distaff is the signal of pleasure and becomes the reward of talent; it is sometimes carried off by the best dancer, sometimes by the archest wag of the company. At a little distance from this standard of revelry is placed its chief agent, the piper, who is always seated on the ground with a hole dug near him, into which the contributions of the assembly are dropt. At the end of every jig, the piper is paid by the young man who dances it, and who endeavours to enhance the value of the gift by first bestowing it on his fair partner. Though a penny a jig is esteemed very good pay, yet the gallantry or ostentation of the contributor anxious at once to appear generous in the eyes of his mistress and to outstep the liberality of his rivals sometimes trebles the sum which the piper usually receives.

I have been at some of these cakes, and have invariably observed the inordinate passion for dancing, so prevalent among the

Irish peasants. It is very rare to find an individual among them who has not been for some time under the tuition of a dancing-master. Thus passes away the Sabbath of an Irish peasant; the first hours of the day are devoted to religion, the rest to the enjoyment of such pleasures as lie within the limited scope of his acquisition.

The Irish possess a natural taste for both music and dancing—kindred arts—and the Irish jig has a most wonderful influence over an Irish heart. The gay Cotillon of France, the slow Pas Grave, the brisk Coupée, the Saraband of Spain, even Scotland's Highland Reel (a near relation) could not in any way take the place of their own lively jig.[1] The following anecdote, illustrative of this, is borrowed from the appendix of Mr. Watkin's interesting 'Memoir of the Irish Bards:'

The farce of the 'Half-Pay Officer' having been brought out at Drury Lane Theatre, the part of an old grandmother was assigned to Mrs. Fryer, an Irishwoman, of the age of eighty-five, who had quitted the stage in the reign of Charles II., fifty years before. During the representation she exerted her utmost abilities; when, however, she was called on to dance a jig, she loitered and seemed overcome; but as soon as the music struck up the 'Irish Trot,' she footed it as nimbly as any girl of five-and-twenty.

WALES

Though the Welsh are very light and active, and, being Celts, ought to have many dances—to judge from other Celtic nations—we can glean few particulars of their native measures. That they do dance often is evident.

> At feasts full merry is the throng,
> With harp, and pipe, and dance, and song;

but perhaps after all they do not scorn to borrow this amusement from their English neighbours. We are told that

> In dress and other things beside,
> The Welsh and English differ wide;

[1] Miss Owenson.

and yet there is some connection too between the two countries, for the national English dance—the *hornpipe*—is called after an obsolete instrument, originally made in Wales. The hornpipe, however, can hardly be described as a national Welsh instrument; no pipe of any kind, not even the bagpipe of other Celts, can hope to rival the popularity of the Welsh harp. It is said that three things were indispensable to a baron of the olden times—a virtuous wife, a cushioned chair, and a well-tuned harp.

A Welsh wedding is an opportunity for much festivity, in which dancing plays an important part. In former times, on the evening before the wedding a room was set apart for the young people to dance in; here they amused themselves for an hour, and then regaled themselves on spiced ale and various dainties. At eight the next morning the procession set out from the bridegroom's house, preceded by a harper playing a spirited march. At the door of the bride's father's house they meet the bride. After the ceremony the harper again led the way—this time to a part of the churchyard not used for burial; there, placing himself under a yew-tree, he struck up the dance, and soon all joined in, the bride and groom leading off the first two dances. Two airs were always sung on these occasions and on no other, 'The Beginning of the World,'[1] and 'My Wife shall have her Way.'[2] Trials of skill in the national games took place after this, and the entertainment, which was kept up to a late hour, concluded with more dancing and singing to the harp.[3]

A curious description of a dance held at St. Almedha's Church, near Brecknock, is given by Giraldus:—'A solemn festival is annually held here, in honour of this saint, in the beginning of August. At this festival you may see men or girls, now in the churchyard with a song, on a sudden falling to the ground as in a trance, then jumping up as in a frenzy and representing with their hands and feet, before the people,

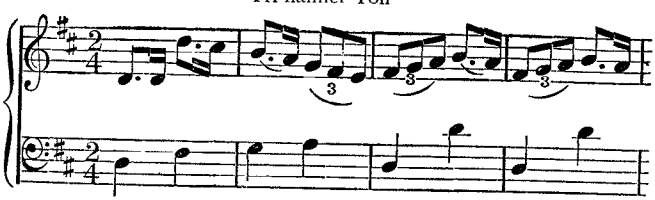
[1] St. Leger's Round, or Sellenger's Round (English).
[2] Hone, *Every-day Book*.
[3] Roberts, *Popular Antiquities of Wales*.

whatever work they have unlawfully done on feast days. You may see one man put his hands, as it were, to the plough ; and another goad the oxen, relieving their toil by a rude song ; others imitating the work of a shoemaker or tanner ; of spinning or weaving ; and being brought into the church and up to the altar, they all come to themselves.' This description is evidently not that of an eye-witness, but taken from report only ; the custom was probably in reality some festival of the different labouring professions, which, according to the Brut, must have been a Druidical custom. The account of the recovery at the altar is probably a Roman Catholic's interpretation of a very natural ending to the rites ; perhaps the work of the coming days was consecrated by some religious ceremony performed at the altar, and this was taken to mean purification for work done on an unlawful day. Another quaint superstition—though to mention this is rather a digression, for which the reader must pardon me—is that on Easter morning the sun itself dances in honour of the resurrection of our Lord ; and the ancient dames of Wales urge their young people to be up early so that they may see the wonderful sight. The same belief exists in the midland districts of Ireland. It is not reported that anyone has seen the marvel ; and this is not to be wondered at, seeing that no one can look at the sun steadily at any hour. There is an allusion to this in an old ballad :

> But, Dick, she dances such a way!
> No sun upon an Easter day
> Is half so fine a sight.[1]

JIG

Tri hanner Tôn



[1] Hone, *Every-day Book*.



I have thus traced dancing through the British Isles, from Cornwall to Skye, from the Court of the metropolis to the Irish cabin, and while admitting that each quarter has its own particular dances, I have also endeavoured to show that many dancing customs are common to all, uniting in one bond all the English-speaking peoples, be they Saxon or Celt.

CHAPTER VII

GIPSY, HUNGARIAN, BOHEMIAN, RUSSIAN, AND POLISH DANCES

GIPSIES

EXCEPT that both are without a fatherland, there seems very little similarity between the Hebrews, a rich, refined, and musical nation, and those hearthless wanderers, poor and uncultivated, the Gipsies. Liszt, in his book on the music of the Bohemians, points out that, during their dispersion and persecution, the Hebrews retained their individuality by living under strictest subjection to antique rule and law: the gipsies, on the other hand, have vindicated their peculiar character by irreclaimable lawlessness. While the Hebrews have a language and a book, the tongue of the gipsies is preserved only in a few folk tales and rude songs. These races, however, so widely separated in sentiment, owe to their common Oriental origin a love of music and dance that are in touch with the beginnings of art.

The mystic or legendary witch dance may claim a few words; thence it will be necessary to glance at the gipsy dances of Russia, Hungary, Transylvania, Italy, Spain, England, Scotland, America, and France.

I am indebted to a correspondent for some notes on the kind of erotic dancing which was practised from the earliest times in the East, and even in Europe, by a class of women who, if not absolutely proved to be gipsies, had at any rate many points of resemblance with them. Thus, the 'Syrian girl who haunts the taverns round,' described by Virgil, suggests the

Syrian and Egyptian dancer, who is of Indo-Persian, that is to say of Luri, or gipsy origin. Spanish dancing girls of old times were conjectured to have come from this universal Hindoo-Romany stock. It would be too much to say that all the deliberately cultivated profligate dancing of the world is of Indo-Persian or gipsy origin, but it is curious to note that the dances of Persia are said to have been originated by ten thousand gipsies sent from India. The description by Delancre of the ancient—shall we say legendary?—dances of the Persian girls pictures that exercise as nothing less than a Witches' Sabbat. They were taught the art by devils, who danced among them in the forms of goats or other animals. The dances were of three kinds, and 'were very wild and rude,' Delancre somewhat unnecessarily says.

Modern gipsy dances in Russia possess a superficial resemblance to these grotesque and rude diversions. The song suggests the dance; old wrinkled beldames, gradually animated by rum, take part with the youthful gipsies, 'jumping and whirling about in more and more rapid rotation, then, uniting in one compact mass, a final gyratory movement is made, and all, exhausted and gasping, fall to the ground in one inert mass.' Liszt characterises this dance as a 'buffera inferna.' Perhaps in no country do the gipsies contribute so much to the general amusement as in Russia. A visitor to St. Petersburg or Moscow is bound to witness the famous entertainment afforded by an evening spent in the gipsy camp. Yet let not the novice suppose that he here finds the genuine child of nature; for (and Liszt is the authority) these deadly and dangerous sirens are made up for show. 'Of all show things, show nationality is the worst!'

More agreeable is the account by a correspondent of the Gipsy Lore Society of a dance of Roumanian gipsies. 'It is too slow for my taste. A dozen or so dance in a circle; they pass their arms round each other's shoulders—rather a difficult position to go through a number of steps gracefully. In spite of that, I have seen them continue for an hour without stopping



WALLACHIAN SOLDIERS DANCING TO TSIGANE ACCOMPANIMENT

(From a Print after D. A. M. Rosen)

a single moment.' Another traveller comments on their vitality: 'I found a tribe of thirty people, men and women, nearly all between fifteen and thirty years old. They looked as if they had travelled far and were tired. I turned to them, and said, "How are you?" "Not very well; we have travelled since dawn, and we are so tired that we cannot hold ourselves up." "Give us some brandy," said one to me, "and we will dance for you and be very light;" and, getting up, she whispered, in a caressing tone, "Give us some brandy, sir, and I will dance the Tañana." The young girl who had promised the dance got up, called another and beckoned to two youths, who came dancing and stood opposite. They moved like flowers in the wind. Their movements and words reminded me of the chosen people dancing among the palms on the heights of Zion, and singing Solomon's Song.'

The gipsy of the Ottoman Empire is called Tchinghiane. He intermarries often with Greeks, and his language and customs are mixed; for instance, he uses the Greek word χορὸς for the dance, as well as *Keliben*, which is the gipsy term for it. By one curious festival which he keeps the student is reminded of the Hebrews, with whom I began by comparing and contrasting the gipsies. The 'kakhava,' or caldron festival, is held during spring near a stream and in a green field with three days' singing and dancing. During this time every gipsy is bound to kill and cook a lamb, a curious custom in a people who may be said to have no religion, and no known connection with Jews.

Walter Thornbury, in his 'Life in Spain,' says that 'Seville is the head-quarters of the gipsy musician and dancer. Make way for the gipsy girl who is going to show us how the Egyptian ghawasses and the Hindoo nautch girls dance. She will dance the Romalis, which is the dance Tiberius may have seen, and which no one but a gipsy dances in Spain. She will dance it to the old Oriental music and hand-clapping, and to an old religious Eastern tune, low and melancholy, diatonic, not chromatic, and full of sudden pauses, which are strange and startling.'

Another author tells us that 'this dancing girl is not romantic; no antelope eyes, no black torrents of overflowing hair, no sweeping fringe of eyelash, no serpentine waist, no fairy



A Gipsy dancing the Vito Sevillano. (After Gustave Doré)
(*From Ch. Davillier's 'Spain'*)

feet, no moonlight voice. No; she is rather like a sailor's wife at Wapping. She has ropy black hair . . . she is stout and thick-set and by no means a sylph. I don't think the

harebell would ever lift up his head again if her strong foot had once come on it. . . . The perpetual hand-clapping is exciting, just as the perpetual low beat of the Sioux calabash drum is exciting. It keeps the mind in a state of fevered tension, highly stimulating to the imagination—tap, tap, tap, it goes, like the perpetual drip, drip, of a wet day.'

Bright has given a good sketch of the gipsy dance in Spain in 1817. Of the figure-dancers he says, 'Many of the performers in the (inferior) theatres are gitanos, and they frequently become private instructors in the evolution of the bolero and fandango. Others make their dancing the means of procuring money by exhibiting their talents in the streets.'

The Cascarrotac, or the mingled Basque and gipsy population, have their special dances. M. Michel, in his 'Pays Basque,' describes them as a class of mountebanks, or, at any rate, of young people who in fêtes are chosen to lead the way, dancing as they go. When the Orleanist Princes returned from Spain, their carriage was preceded by the Cascarrots, 'who leaped and danced all the way from Saint-Jean de Luz to Bayonne.' In 1660 Louis XIV. was honoured by a band of Arascabilaire dancers, who danced to the sound of small round bells and drums, and performed the national movement. A troupe of Basque performers greatly distinguished themselves in 1701 in their extraordinary feats of dancing and capering. They wore a number of little bells, and were accompanied on the tambourine. The distinction between Basque and Cascarrotac dancing is pointed out by Mr. Wentworth Webster in a communication to the Journal of the Gipsy Lore Society: 'The chief and all the most characteristic of the Basque dances are danced by men only. Among the Cascarrots it is the women and girls who dance more than the men, either among themselves or with the men. This, I think, makes a real distinction. In very few of the old Basque dances did the women join; most were for men alone. In modern dances, learnt from the French or Spaniards, both sexes join; but I have never seen, away from the influence of towns, any Basque

girl or girls dance the fandango in public, as the Cascarrot girls are fond of doing.' The dance before Philip V. in 1701 (previously referred to) 'was probably the Pamperruque, the official dance of Bayonne, which was danced as a sort of serenade before distinguished persons passing through Bayonne.' Mme. d'Aulnoy in her 'Mémoires' gives an account of it.

In the 'Niederlandische Sagen,' quoted by Engel, the following event is told as happening in Herzeele :—

A troop of gipsies had arrived in a valley near that place. They stretched a tight-rope on which they danced, springing sometimes into the air so high, that all who saw it were greatly astonished. A little boy among the spectators cried, 'Oh, if I could but do that!'

'Nothing easier,' said an old gipsy: 'here is a powder; when you have swallowed it, you will be able to dance as well as any of us.'

The boy took the powder and swallowed it. In an instant his feet became so light that he found it impossible to keep them on the ground. The slightest movement which he made raised him into the air. He danced upon the ears of the growing corn, on the tops of trees, yea, even on the weathercock of the church tower. The people of the village thought this suspicious, and shook their heads, especially when they furthermore observed a disinclination in the boy to attend church.

They therefore consulted with the parson, who got him all right by means of exorcism—but it was a hard struggle to banish the potent effects of the gipsy's powder!

The custom of wearing bells was adopted by gipsies in England in the sixteenth century. Dekker thus describes them :—'Their apparell is od and phantasticke, thou it be neuer so full of rents; the men weare scarfes of callico or any other base stuffe, hanging their bodies, like morris-dancers, with bels, and other toyes, to intice the country people to flocke about them, and to wonnder at their fooleries or rather rancke knaueries.'

Another still earlier writer, describing English gipsies, under the impression that they were alien Egyptians, says :—'The people of the country be swarte, and doth go disguised

in their apparel, contrary to other nacyons; they be lyght fyngered, and use pyking; they have little maner and euyl loggying, and yet they be pleasaunt dauncers.'

A quotation shows that the gipsies of that time were professional dancers: 'The Egyptians that dansit before the king (James V. of Scotland) in Halyrud House, received forty shillings.' This brings us to Scotland, where gipsies to this day are often called 'Egyptians;' 'Scrapies' was an old but less frequent name for them, and a street named after the race in Kirk-Yetholm—'the chief gypserie of Scotland'—is 'Tinkers' Row.'

Some peculiarities belonged to a few of the tribe seen by Simson at Lochgelly. They sang in their own language a 'croon' while dancing. Charles Stewart, an old gipsy with five or six women in his train, performed at a wedding in a manner emblematic of anything but peace and domestic felicity. In the centre of his circle Charles capered in the most ludicrous way, while sweeping his cudgel around in all directions. He sometimes danced outside the circle, but the cudgel was the feature of this wedding dance; a wrong turn or a hesitating step was promptly corrected by a movement of this weapon, which indeed regulated every figure of the dance. A twirl dismissed the women, a cut recalled them; a wide sweep—and down they squatted on the floor; a light twist—and they sprang up. In the midst of the silence the cudgel spoke with a force unknown to the Cheironomic dancers of old. In Russia, where a somewhat similar dance is performed without spoken directions, it is by napkins that the guidance is given. James Robertson 'regulated' his wife and sisters-in-law in the dance by the flourishing of his bonnet. This gipsy was known in the kingdom of Fife. 'When the women got intoxicated,' says the chronicler, 'the dance became wild, extravagant, and deficient in decorum.' James was likened in 'Tam O'Shanter' to the devil playing to the witches. Scott, too, has made a gipsy woman famous. The roadside arabs of Scotland are much mixed with native blood. Allan writes of a gipsy:

A stalwart tinkler wight was he,
And weel could mend a pot or pan,
An' deftly weel could thraw a flee
An' neatly weave the willow van.
An' sweetly wild were Allan's strains
An' many a jig an' reel he blew,
Wi' merry tilts he charmed the swains,
Wi' barbèd spear the other slew.

It will not occur to the sailor as he dances the hornpipe that his steps are modelled on a gipsy dance of Russia called the Barina, but such is indeed the case, unless the learned are mistaken on that point.

It is curious to note that the gipsies, Chyaneros, of South America, are held in contempt, and were considered as monkeys by the true Indians.

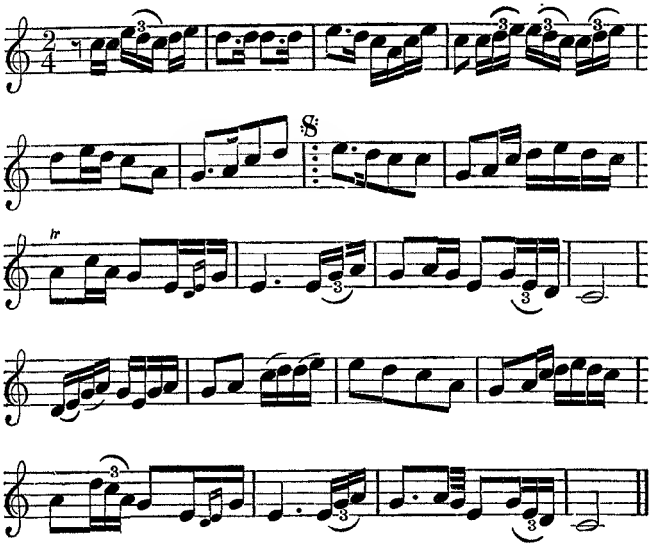
The genuineness that Liszt denied to the Moscow gipsies he discovered among the Hungarians. The Hungarian Tzigane is admittedly more gipsy than any other variety. His musical feeling is on the whole more original, although in one instance—that of the *csárdás*—he has been convicted of plagiarism, of actually borrowing from the art of the country with which he is most associated, traveller though he be. At any rate, though the dance of the *csárdás* be proved to be Hungarian, the gipsies are said to play the music of it better than anyone else. Professor Herrmann, during his travels, observed that gipsies, and particularly gipsy fiddlers, do not sing for their own amusement the words of the Hungarian songs which they play, nor do they dance the *csárdás*; but in the popular dance of the Hungarian gipsies there are many elements of the Hungarian *csárdás*. In practice, the *csárdás* dance depends upon the gipsy accompaniment. 'No entertainment without the gipsies,' says the proverb and this is acted on in Hungary by the peasant and prince alike.

The young gipsy girls are most wonderful dancers. They dance like the fawns in the forest, like the birds in the tree, with all the light-heartedness, with all the carelessness of wild, un-

tamed beings. Whatever their faults may be, they are never banal, and as they whirl about in their multi-coloured gowns, which bear traces of the dust of many travelled roads, they bring with them a vision of far-off caravans, of wandering tribes who come we do not know whence, who go we do not know whither, but who charm and fascinate us with their beautiful eyes, their splendid lips, their raven tresses, and their lithe, pliable figures.

DANCE TUNE OF THE INDIAN GIPSIES

(*From 'Through Romany Song Land,' by L. A. Smith, by permission of Mr. David Stott*)



These strange people, who appeal so strongly to the romantic in us—called gipsy in England, caird in Scotland, pharaohnepek in Hungary, gyphtoi in Greece—have no racial music or dance; yet they have infused into those which they borrow of

other races so much of their own genius, spirit, and weird *diablerie*, as to make them practically new creations, for which they should have the credit.



Gipsy Dance.
(*From an Engraving after Marie Weigmann*)

HUNGARY

Every nation represents itself in its dances combined with its music and folk song. Note, for example, the gallantry expressed in the French minuet; the measured gaiety of an English country dance; the wild, stormy, but barren uniformity of the Scotch reel; the gravity changing to fire in the Spanish bolero. The tasteless remnant of the Jewish feast-dance in many countries; the loudly joyous, enduring, but monotonous German native dance, speak plainly to those who can read between the steps. But to go further—see how the German tramps through

a minuet, how the Frenchman wriggles through a country dance; and shall we say how the Englishwoman imparts a dignity into the fandango? but perhaps that would be going too far, and suggest exaggeration. Enough that any nation, borrowing from another, imprints its own character and brings its own modifications to the modelling of the dance.

The modern Hungarian dances a great deal, and his national music is, so to speak; dance music, but though often fierce and warlike, it is more often melancholy, dropping from the major into the minor, when it is not minor throughout. The former barbarity and ferocity of the people are suggested in some of their dances, and the musical accompaniment, often performed by gipsies, is sometimes quite lawless. Some steps and positions indicate the pride of the Hungarian. The heroic features of the dance are relieved by tender and simple passages.

Madame Janka Wohl writes enthusiastically on the pictures of the Hungarian dance suggested by the well-known 'Rhapsodies': 'The fire and sweetness of Tokay are inherent in those languorous *mélopées*, with their bold and electric rhythm. By degrees the rhythm quickens, it becomes suddenly rugged and abrupt, but is ever an intoxicating melody. Gaiety leads the way, contagious fire thrills the dancers; they seek and flee, they grasp and elude each other, delirium seizes the fervent souls that are drawn into the whirlwind of the mad, delicious music—a delirium which culminates in the wild cry of fury and delight that breaks forth now and again from the lips of the dancer, be he either prince or peasant. A shrill note of passionate vibration, that, like the sound of a fanfare, electrifies the masses.'

The principal Hungarian dance is the *csárdás*; it is stated by Professor Herrmann to be 'both from the musical and choreographical point of view independent of the gipsies,' and to have been 'played and danced in the time of the lyre-artists who were not gipsies.' The dance has much altered in our century; fashion has especially interfered with the so-called salon-csárdás. But in all the variations of time and place certain leading ideas are present. The rhythm is identical.

As regards the choreographic part of the *csárdás*, Professor Herrmann traces it to the ancient Hungarian *palotás* dance popular in the sixteenth century; the *palotás*, again, was connected with the dance accompanied by the lyre-artists—*lanto sok*, and may be followed back to the beginning of the middle ages.

'Csárdás' is the Hungarian for those solitary inns dotted about the puztas. The Baron Bela Winkheim wished to show that in the change of *palotás* into *csárdás* the political changes due to Kossuth and the Revolution were mirrored. Thus the



Hungarian Csárdás
(*From an Engraving after J. H. Ramberg, circa* 1800)

majestic mood of the ancient dance developed into a movement better suited to a feverish generation ready to overthrow the constitution. The gipsies were quick to seize the inspiration in the air, to fashion a *csárdás* music in sympathy.

The *csárdás* begins with a slow and solemn walk, after which the dancer places his lady in position; this figure is shown in the sketch. After several movements of a complicated nature, and sometimes with a very melancholy accompaniment, the dance becomes more and more animated, ending in a mad whirl.

It is sad that the dance, once inseparable from music, and

joining naturally with song among primitive peoples, should be killed by the tendency of civilisation. As Liszt points out civilisation, by raising the exigencies which it puts to every art, obliges each art to isolate itself in order to perfect itself in a technical sense. From being once a happy married pair, dance and music have arrived at a divorce !

Would it be too frivolous to mention the young man who, when languidly leaning against the wall, said he could not dance, because the tune bothered him so ?

BOHEMIA

The Slavs, and especially the Poles and the Czechs, are great votaries of the dance. As early as the sixth century of our era Greek writers—Procopius, Cesariensis, and Manricius– tell us of the dances of Slavonic nations. Those of Poland are the most poetical, those of Bohemia the most numerous and varied, belonging to every condition of life, and accompanying every domestic incident of importance. No baptism, no marriage, no funeral, no harvest, is without its fitting dance. There even exists a superstition that flax will not grow if the good woman who sows it, be she never so old, neglect the appointed dance during carnival-tide.

A youth who is unskilled in the art finds little favour with the women :

> He who would the maidens please
> Should not lack a handsome face ;
> But, their favour to secure,
> He must dance with ease and grace.

And, again, the festivities of Bohemian villagers give occasion for finery. The men wear embroidered shirts, velvet waistcoats with silver buttons, and splendidly ornamental handkerchiefs fastened to the belt, whence they flutter like flags. The effect of the music is heightened by loud shouts, jokes, and snapping of the fingers.

It has been said in an earlier chapter that, in order to understand the dances of a people, the national characteristics of that people must be taken into account. The ancient Czechs were a brave, wild, strong, and free race, who in earliest times were rather warriors than husbandmen. Their faults were frivolity, instability, and obstinacy, together with insistance upon revenge. Their life was simple and primitive, and their first recreation seems to have been music. When, under the shade of pine and beech trees, they then sang their native songs, the inspiration to rhythmic movement could not have been far off, and, no doubt, the dance was soon added to the music. In accordance, therefore, with their warlike nature, one of the earliest dances of the Bohemians was a sword dance, such as was described by Tacitus as seen in Germania, and such, in fact, as has been common to many races. It is known, also, that the Czechs used religious dances in the highest degree natural to their mystic polytheism. Hills and rocks, streams, forests, and trees, were held sacred; sacrifices were made to them; and dances, as well as prayers and songs, were offered to propitiate these countless deities.

A curious custom of the ancient Czechs was that of dancing at crossways, or in woods, over new-made graves. The gods of the lower regions were here petitioned, by means of a dance, for the peace of the departed soul. This performance was not, as might be supposed, of a melancholy order, but, according to Comas, very lively, *jocos profanos*. The early Christians of Bohemia had to contend with the witches' dance, which must be included among the religious ones. Performed at dead of night by torchlight on the hilltops, this orgy was calculated to frighten outsiders. The horrible and fantastic shapes thrown by flitting shadows in the weird light served to encourage the mystery of the rite, and keep it secret.

But the wisdom of some of the introducers of Christianity kept up, or rather modified, some of the pagan customs, and pressed them into the service of Christian worship. Thus it happened that in Bohemia the original sacrificial dances were

changed into church dances, of which traces were observable in special ceremonies until the beginning of the seventeenth century, although forbidden by councils dating from the ninth century, when the rites became corrupted into orgies.

What Hegel said of folk-song applies to the folk-dance—namely, that this flowery field should ever blossom anew, and that it is only by oppressed peoples, cut off from progress and unable to burst into reawakened life of light-hearted song, that the original old songs are preserved. The Bohemians held to their nationality, and therefore to their popular songs, down to the seventeenth century. During the Thirty Years' War, which had its principal centre in Bohemia, whole villages were obliged to emigrate, and the inhabitants began to wander over the world as beggars. From that time German influence increased by force in the seventeenth century, and by intermarriage and education in the eighteenth. Hence we see that about that period the popular dances and songs were borrowed from the Germans.

Formerly they danced to a song instead of to instruments, and these songs were always extemporised—a custom continuing to the early days of our own century. Like the folk-song, the folk-dance was a true mirror of the strength and independence of the people. The dances of Bohemia are named either from the accompanying song, the motive illustrated by the steps and gestures, or the place where they originated. Some of the names are humorous. Thus, the *Zezhulicka* (the cuckoo) is called after the song. The steps resemble those of the Mazur. In the *Dudák* (bagpipe), the piper himself dances in the middle, turning from right to left, the others circling round him; the *Skákava* (the jumping dance) is performed during the chanting of a hymn, such as an invocation to the Virgin.

It cannot be said that the *Starocesky*, the ancient minuet of this country, is as elegant as that of France; yet it is distinguished by noble simplicity and measured slow steps. It is especially proper to weddings. The partners dance with

crossed hands while singing. The bear dance was not without its significance. The dancing bear and a man clad in straw personified winter and the god of winter respectively. Winter was represented as having been victoriously overcome, and hurried along by a joyous crowd of youths and maidens, symbols of awakening spring. The high leaps made by the dancers were taken to signify the noon elevation of the sun, also the good quality of the corn, and the fine length of the flax which should reward their toil.

The May dance and the St. John's dance belong to the category of religious rites, and are elsewhere noticed. Waldau gives a detailed account of all the numerous dances of Bohemia.

To the *polka* belongs the first place in importance, if not in time, of all Bohemian dances. It is said to be a perfectly modern production, although similar measures must have been common to many races from earlier times, to mention only the *schottische* and the *volta*. Sir John Davies's 'Orchestra' (1596) has the lines :

> Yet is there one, the most delightful kind,
> A lofty jumping, or a leaping round,
> Where, arm in arm, two dancers are entwin'd,
> And whirl themselves, in strict embracement bound ;
> And still their feet an anapæst do sound,
> An anapæst in all their music's song,
> Whose first two feet are short and third is long.

But, at any rate, the peculiar half-step made its appearance under the right conditions and in exactly the happiest circumstances, when a certain Bohemian peasant girl was observed dancing it 'out of her own head,' more or less ; extemporising, for her own recreation, song, tune, and steps ; and fortunately, all under the observation of a keen artist—Josef Neruda. On the spot (it was Elbeleinitz), and at the moment (on a Sunday afternoon), he noted down the melody and dance. The people of Elbeleinitz adopted tune and step ; and the name 'Půlka,' meaning half (half-step), was spontaneously given to it. It was introduced at Prague almost

immediately (1835); and at Vienna, where the dance and music were enthusiastically received. The tune was published by Helmer.

In 1840 a dancing-master of Prague gave the *polka* on the stage of the Odéon in Paris, with brilliant success; like wildfire it spread through Europe, and even crossed the ocean to New York.

In Paris a thing of fashion at once gains importance: the *polka* divided public attention with the most vital questions. In the morning one might be a *député*; in the evening, none the less enthusiastic, a *polkeur*. A contemporary says it created almost as much sensation as the dancing mania in the middle ages. Nor was there wanting an attendant epidemic, sufficiently burlesque; it was the Polka-morbus—the pain felt by the novice on the left side of the right foot on the morrow of a dance. Heine found the vibrating wooden keys of the piano affect the nerves terribly, and the great whirling disease, the polka, gives the finishing stroke. 'The dance,' he said, not referring to the fatal polka, 'is the prayer of the feet.'

It was one M. Cellarius who introduced the polka into Paris salons. 'Vivat Cellarius' was the universal cry. He was obeyed like a king; none rebelled against his authoritative 1 2 3 4 and his simple and double steps. He was so much in request that it was whispered that he had only one hour free, between 2 and 3 A.M., and that he selfishly insisted upon keeping this hour for slumber. The theatre, always a mirror of manners, adopted the fashion, and when a play-bill announced 'Le véritable Polka' (for it used to be *le* polka and not *la* polka, as now), 'par le véritable Cellarius,' the crowd would be great and the joy of the spectators immense.

The Paris papers became destitute of news. 'Our private letters,' wrote the 'Times,' 'state that politics are for the moment suspended in public regard by the new and all-absorbing pursuit, the polka . . . which embraces in its qualities the intimacy of the waltz with the vivacity of the Irish jig.' The wife of a celebrated ex-minister, desiring to figure in it at

a *soirée dansante*, monopolised the professor *par excellence* of that speciality, for three hours one morning, at 200 francs the hour. It was an unfortunate diversion for the war party, whose subscriptions for the sword of honour for Admiral Dupetit-Thouars went astray through the fascinating novelty.

The 'Illustrated London News' (March 23, 1844) was not less sarcastic:—'The polka has seized this volatile and light-hearted people universally by the heels. With all respect for our learned neighbours, we think that St. Vitus and not St. Denis must have been the patron saint of France. . . . The English are an imitative people, and we may reasonably expect to find the Polka among the west-end importations during the season.' This expectation was abundantly justified.

Cellarius had come over to England to increase his purse and fame ; and other masters got hold of versions of the polka. One had been to Paris on purpose to learn it. Another had acquired it in Germany ; a third, more shrewdly, 'had been taught the dance by a Bohemian nobleman.' Four lessons in the polka were said to be enough to perfect anyone acquainted with the principles of dancing. The 'Illustrated London News' dropped its humour and reported with due gravity the first drawing-room polka as danced at Almack's, 'and at the balls of the nobility and gentry of this country.' On May 11, 1844, it gave a description of the five figures, with the remark that those who wished to shine should dance the whole. A very complicated explanation of the 'heel and toe' step followed. A little hop was to be made on the right leg, the left heel dropping close to the right foot, and so on. Three pictures illustrated the article. In conclusion the journal observed that the polka was a noiseless dance. 'There is no stamping of heels or toes, or kicking of legs in sharp angles forward. This may do very well at the threshold of a Bohemian auberge, but is inadmissible in the salons of London or Paris.' The ladies are recommended to shorten their dresses by means of a bunch of artificial violets attached thereto, from the waist to the lower part of the skirt. This would

serve to loop up to the desired shortness, contributing greatly to the elegance of the dance. It was, in fact, indispensable to show the feet.

The dance was seen in perfection at the Opera, where Perrot and Carlotta Grisi, attired in the picturesque Slavonic dress, executed the wonderful step. All heads and hearts took the craze. The polka mania in England was short-lived, but so violent that everything was named after the dance; clothes, coiffures, nay, even public-houses—'The Polka Arms,' for instance. A magazine of the fashions describes a material called 'polka,' 'as pliant and as graceful in its folds as the dance from which it has borrowed its name.' Mrs. Jackson's 'Polka Book,' written in 1849, gave a recipe for making the 'Victoria Polka' in crochet, with eight-thread Berlin wool. This appears to have been a sort of crochetted Cardigan jacket.

The comic papers were not idle. Not only did the polka do duty in political cartoons, as in Leech's picture of Lord Brougham dancing opposite the woolsack, 'a new dance introducing the old double-shuffle,' but its votaries were mercilessly chaffed by Mr. Punch. Especially severe was he upon the polka in its decline and fall. His correspondent complains that after having been introduced to the accursed polka in its rise, progress, and apotheosis, at Vienna, he had to go through the same experience in Paris, London, and the country:—

> The eternal round of questions, 'Have you seen the polka?' (Have I seen it!) 'Can you, &c. &c.?' is now heard in country towns. Then, sir, the way in which these rustics execute it. Two or three couples who have been talking big about it for the preceding three weeks, trot, with faces of solemn self-satisfaction, round the small circle into which they are hemmed by the gaping crowd, holding each other at arms' length, and rolling their heads most religiously from right to left according to instructions; this they vary with occasional attempts at the 'toe and heel' step, which consists in stamping their own heels upon other people's toes; and then they march away in triumph to receive the congratulations of friends, leaving the poor, deluded spectators under the impression

that they have seen the polka. . . . I start for Lapland to-morrow; though I dare say I shall find my enemy has preceded me. . . .

Another extract from *Punch* will serve to close this subject more agreeably.

PRETTY POLK (1844)

Darling Polka! ere we part
Hear th' outpourings of my heart!
Since the season now is o'er
Wretched I can polk no more.
Hear my vow before I go,
Polka μοῦ, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.

By those steps so unconfined,
By that neat kick-up behind,
Coulon's hop, and Michau's slide,
Backward, forward, or aside,
By th' alternate heel and toe,
Polka μοῦ, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.

By the waltz's giddy round,
By the galop's maddening bound,
By the obsolete quadrille,
Polka mine! 'I love thee still.'
Compared with thee each dance is slow.
Polka μοῦ, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.

Happy season, thou art gone,
I, alas, must polk alone;
Though the country now I roll to,
Almack's holds my heart and soul, too.
Can I cease to love thee? No,
Polka μοῦ, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.

POLAND

The beautiful national dances of the Poles are known all over the world; the graceful *Polonaise*, the bold *Mazur*, the ingenious *Cracovienne*, belong to prince and peasant alike. Formerly their dancing was accompanied by singing instead of instrumental music. Their songs were improvised and probably

never written down. Only in recent times has interest been aroused in national and historical survivals, collections of ballads, folklore, and the like. The ancient poems of Poland show traces of the Vendic language. The Vends of Lusatia were not an oppressed race, and their songs and dances are merry accordingly.

To come to the Poles proper, the same qualities which make them so remarkable as linguists lend themselves to the cultivation of the arts. Balzac sketches the Polish woman in these words:—'Angel through love; demon through fantasy; child through faith; sage through experience; man through the brain; woman through the heart; giant through hope; mother through sorrow; poet through dreams.'

In the *Polonaise* we have a dance characteristic of the country, where we find united oriental splendour and gravity, with the proud spirit of an independent Western race. The old custom added much to the beauty of this dance, which, not many years ago, was still performed with weapons. It is more of a procession than a dance. Opened by the couple of highest rank, it takes in the whole company, aged men and women, children, high dignitaries, magistrates, none too solemn or careworn to be excused this beautiful exercise of etiquette. The promenade is broken by curtseys. One of its features—that of the gentleman giving up his partner as soon as another comes to claim her—was originally a symbol of the equal rights of all nobles in the state. The new claimant for a lady's hand in the dance must clap his hands after bowing before her. This is the signal to the dancer in possession, who is obliged to give up the lady with apparent politeness; but he retires to a corner and meditates reprisals. Nowa says that the *Polonaise* belongs especially to the upper classes. It must have been suitable to the magnificence of the ancient Polish Court, whose nobles were splendid art patrons. The custom of opening a ball with the *Polonaise* has been introduced in many European Courts.

In spite of its courtly origin, this dance was in some

measure adopted by the people, in the form of a march. Village festivals were opened with the Polonaise.

If the *Polonaise* reflects the spirit of the old aristocracy of Poland, the *Mazur*, full of life and expression, reflects the popular mind. It dates from the sixteenth century, and is usually performed by six or eight couples. Chorley thought that the music originated in an old Christmas tune. Chopin introduced new features into the dance, infusing it with melan-



Polish Dance
(From an Etching by J. A. Atkinson)

choly. Among the native dancers there are known several varieties of the *Mazur*—the rustic, the warlike, the sad. Historical *Mazurs* are named after generals or great events. In others, love sorrows, or the regrets of an exile, are expressed. The *Obertas*, one of the most popular of national dances, is a variation of the *Mazur*. It is thus described in Grove's 'Dictionary of Music' by Miss Middleton :—'The couples follow their leader, turning from right to left, and describing a circle or oval ring. The woman sometimes dances round her partner,

and sometimes *vice versâ* ; a song is often sung at the same time,' and sometimes ' the rude accompaniment of the bagpipes or other primitive combination of instruments.' The wild and romping nature of this dance is indicated by its title, which has a second meaning to that of ' turning round '—namely, perplexity or confusion.

The *Krakowiak* is a circular dance accompanied by songs, sometimes flattering or satirical, and improvised at the moment when the dancers pause after a round. The man of the first couple has to start this song of praise (or otherwise) of his fair partner. At other times a ballad or a madrigal is sung ; and the dance varies according to the song. It should be enlivened by the clink of iron-bound boots, or of the brass and silver rings on the performers' belts. In the mountains a vigorous *Krakowiak* is executed by dancers surrounding one who performs feats of agility, hatchet in hand, in time to the music. In Paris, the ' Cracovienne ' was danced at the Opera by Fanny Elssler.

The *Kozaks* are lively dances, similar to *polkas*, showing the agility of the Laporogues. The *Redowa* and the *Varsoviand* belong also to Poland.

The ancient Polish national dances, so free and joyous, grew sad when the country was partitioned. A new dance, one in harmony with the unhappy condition of things, became popular. It was called the *Kolomejka*, and is a Carpathian dance.

There is nothing in it of the majestic *Polonaise*, of the merry *Mazur*, or of the noisy *Krakowiak*. During the performance of the *Kolomejka* lips are dumb and faces downcast. Partners hold each other by a branch, or ribbon. At a given moment, but without a word, the girls let go their end of the ribbon, and run away with graceful gestures ; the men follow with a supplicating mien. When the women are mutely persuaded to give in, they hide their faces in their aprons. Towards the end of the pantomime the twig or ribbon is dropped by both partners ; the girl throws herself into the

arms of the man; and they whirl around together in quicker time. It would be impossible to depict more faithfully yet poetically the sorrow of losing the land, the wish to reconquer it, and the joy felt when the patriotic task is accomplished.

RUSSIA

The ordinary dance of Russians is of very ancient Slavonian origin, mixed with some Tartar elements. It has nothing in common with the existing country dances of Europe. It has no whirling or leaping, but is marked by the gentle, one might say tender, walk of the woman and by much bowing on the part of the man, who sometimes bends his knee and rises again suddenly. Whoever has seen Chinese, Mongols, and other Tartars dance, recognise in the Russian art many of the steps. Oriental dancing everywhere possesses some common features. A more or less quick movement of naked feet, a more or less accentuated swing of the hips, and the national dance of Russia, not wholly Eastern, is beautiful of its kind. Like the Ionian dance, it represents a love drama. The girl glides about gracefully; often crossing her hands over her breast, she raises sometimes one, sometimes the other shoulder, or hip; and as she passes with bent head in front of her partner, she throws on him a side glance which means anything she wishes to tell him or make him believe. No instrumental accompaniment is required, the performers themselves sing an improvised song. Mr. Joseph Haigold relates that while he was travelling with friends through a village south of Moscow, some well-dressed peasants, girls and boys, asked to perform a dance. Forming a circle, they danced to the melody of a song, in which the names of one of the company recurred constantly. This dance lasted about an hour.

There is an orbicular dance with a sung chorus, surrounding the queen of the festival. Another dance is the *Pletionka*, the braid, somewhat similar to the Greek chain dances. After singing 'Whither shall we go in the excess of our joy?' the

whole troupe fall suddenly on the grass, and remain there in ecstasy for awhile. In the *Khorovodi*, a circular wedding dance, the performers crowned with flowers express the follow-



Russian Wedding Dance
(From an Engraving after J. B. Le Prince, 1767)

ing story. A young man complains to his mother that he is still unmarried, although so many maidens dance on the green. She allows him to pay his addresses to the one he

likes best. At this point of the song the girl who plays the lover's part gives a ring to one of the group. The chosen one accepting the ring enters the middle of the circle, where she is crowned with the wreath of flowers which her lover had in readiness for her. The chorus continue their song in honour of the love and union of the happy pair. There is something of Greek feeling in this representation of a scene in real life. There are indeed survivals in Russia of the Greek dances. A Pyrrhic dance is executed by horsemen, with spurs and clanking swords to form a martial accompaniment. A labyrinth dance has twenty or thirty couples in a circle, attached to each other by a handkerchief.

But, going back to Russian dances that have less correspondence with the manners of neighbouring people, we find that in spite of their climate, with its extremes of heat and cold, in spite of the northern element of their character, the Russian has no very energetic dance. His conditions of life have been too oppressive. He moves in a small confined place, pirouetting slowly, and performing a rather heavy pantomime, in which his shoulders, arms, and hips have full play. A long guitar-like instrument, the Balaléica, accompanies these turns. So much for the men, and now let us see what chance there might be for a certain liveliness in the Russian women. They are thus described by Anthonie Jenkinson, writing in 1557 :—'If a woman be not beaten with a whip once a weeke, she will not be good, and therefore they look for it orderlie, and the women say that if their husbands did not beat them, they should not love them.'

And Victor Trust in 1880 :—'A Russian peasant woman who is not whipped from time to time complains of being neglected by her husband. The proverb says, "I love thee like my soul, and I beat thee like my fur-cape."'

Amongst the Kalmucks it is not astonishing to hear that the women's dance is monotonous and tame, a sad pantomime. That of the men (the oppressed become oppressors) is imperious and lively, the spirit of domination being displayed in

their bearing and gestures. Rather trying to the digestion must be the *Makovitza*, or Dance of Cakes, a form of harvest thanksgiving, sometimes a petition for plenty. Each girl here carries a cake made of honey and poppy-seed, and eats it to the rhythm of the dance; be it fast or slow, she dare not discontinue her steps.

The dance of the Ukraine is a mixture of Polish, Russian, and even English. It is not so graceful as the Russian country dance. The Ukraine is to Russia what Provence is to France, a southernmost district where everything that has breath dances naturally. Thence come the musicians, who play and sometimes gaily jump round the banqueting tables of the great people of Russia.

The Russian dances of Court and society have developed in far different fashion. It is strange to observe how this part of the nation has adopted the dances of a conquered people, and that the *Polonaise* and the *Mazur* are the most important dances of the cities, setting aside the modern figures common to all European pleasure-seekers. The introduction in the Russian Court of foreign dances coincided with the adoption of foreign dress and other customs; so that, in the time of Peter the Great, ignorance of the minuet or of Polish and English dances was looked upon as a serious defect in education. Catherine II. was very fond of the ballet, and commanded beautiful dances, operas, and pantomime ballets. The Empress Elizabeth was a most accomplished dancer. It was said that in order to see the minuet danced to perfection one should go to the Russian Court. Even the national country dance was performed with much cleverness by their sovereign.

In 1768 a curious ballet was given at Court in honour of the vaccination of the Czarina and the Grand Duke. It was called 'The Conquered Prejudice.' In the background of the stage was the temple of Æsculapius; on the left a large ugly building erected by Ignorance. At its gate stood Chimera with several child victims at her feet. Occasional thunder and flashes of lightning were introduced.

During the storm Ruthenia sits pensive, divided between the fear of death and a new hope. In vain does the Genius of Science seek to give her courage. On the other side she is influenced by Superstition, Ignorance, and the folk who eagerly bring their children to sacrifice before Chimera.

Finally the storm ceases, and lovely music announces Ruthenia's happy escape from danger. But their evil geniuses still try to influence the people, and to the rescue comes the Russian Minerva, who has herself been vaccinated for the benefit of humanity. Hereupon follows a lively scene, ending in the repulse of Superstition and Ignorance, who try to win Minerva by flattering words, and the slaying of Chimera by the goddess. With a crash the ugly building falls to pieces, and Ruthenia directs that a commemoration column is to be put in its place.

All is not over, for in spite of the triumph Ruthenia sorrows over her beloved Alcind, who is an apostle of vaccination. Minerva, however, conducts her to the temple of Æsculapius, where Alcind is discovered in safety. Ignorance makes another attempt to win Alcind, but Minerva works upon him and the whole people to banish the evil one from the land. A glory appears in the heavens, and crowns with laurels the bust of Catherine II., which heads the commemorative column. Then Time, Truth, Reason, and Courage appear; Minerva crowns Ruthenia, and a joyful dance concludes the ballet.

Of modern dancing in Russia Mr. Sutherland Edwards writes:

> Dancing in Russian society is very much like that in other countries, except that in Russia the ball always ends with a Mazurka —of which the rhythm and the step are known everywhere, but not the figures and general character. In Russia it is danced by an indefinite number of couples. A kind of follow-my-leader aspect is given to it by all imitating the evolutions of the first. Another peculiarity of this dance consists in the ladies choosing their partners, a process which is effected in a variety of ingenious ways, more or less complimentary to the gentlemen selected.

The figures are gone through like those of our cotillon.

In a Russian ball-room a lady is never engaged for the entire waltz or polka, but for one or at most two turns round the room. The Russians, it appears, have a special waltz, light, graceful in character, called the *Canaïca.*

The *Polonaise,* of course, opens the ball. Théophile Gautier described in 1866 the manner of this ceremony, for it is nothing less. The spectators in the ball-room of the Winter Palace separated so as to leave free a pathway of which they formed the hedges. Everyone in position, the orchestra played a majestic air, and with slow steps the promenade began, led by the Emperor giving his hand to some lady whom he wished to honour. They were followed by the rest of the Court, all according to precedence:—

The *cortège* of brilliant uniforms goes on increasing—a nobleman leaves the hedge and takes a lady by the hand, and this new couple take their place in the procession, keeping step by step with the leader. It must be very difficult to walk thus under the fire of a thousand eyes, possibly ironical. Military habits do much for the men, but how different for the women. Most of them walk to perfection, and it is a very rare art, that of walking gracefully and simply while being watched; more than one great actress has never understood it. What adds to the originality of the Russian Court is that from time to time a young Circassian prince in his fastidious Oriental dress, or a Mongolian officer, will join the *cortège.* Mahomedan prince, or duke—are they not both subjects of the Emperor of all the Russias?

CHAPTER VIII

THE DANCE IN FRANCE

If to Italy we owe the Renaissance of Dancing, to France we owe its development. The French fixed the rules of dancing and transmitted them to other countries. Taking dancing as an art, it is a French art, and no other nation has brought it to such a pitch of taste and delicacy.

When dancing degenerated towards the end of the Roman empire, it found a refuge in Gaul, where it was still kept up in various circuses and theatres. The light-heartedness of the Gauls, their natural gaiety, their love for violent exercise and for pleasure of all sorts, made them delight in dancing and indulge in it with great energy. In spite of the repugnance of the Roman aristocracy, and the prohibitions and anathemas of councils and synods, it was always one of the chief pastimes of the Gauls, and, later on, of the French.

Dancing was an early institution in France; it dates back from the time of knighthood, when kings gave their vassals dancing entertainments, and the newly made knights had to show their agility and strength before the populace. It is probable that we have here the origin of the quadrilles and other movements on horseback.

The Intermezzi, or Entremets, from which sprang dances, are very ancient. They were performances held at banquets to divert the guests while waiting from dish to dish, and can be traced back to 1237, when St. Louis gave a wedding feast to his brother Robert at Compiègne. Froissart relates that at this feast a knight crossed the hall, riding on horseback over a large tight-rope, stretched over the heads of the guests. Even

the skilled acrobats of modern times have not, so far as I know, carried their art to such a pitch as this !

In 1393, a dancing entertainment was given by the city of Paris to King Charles VI., and a similar one was offered by the



Horse Quadrille

town of Amiens in 1398. Of the former ('the Burning Ballet'), an interesting account is given in the Chronicles of Froissart. It was the custom in France to have a charivari (a kind of mas-

querade) in carnival or on special occasions, such as that of a widow marrying again. On January 29, 1393, a festival was held in the Royal Palace, on the occasion of the wedding of the widowed Queen Isabel of Bavaria. The king himself and four of the nobles, who thought it would be a pleasant diversion to have a dance of wild men, disguised themselves as savages, in close-fitting garments of linen, covered with pitch and tow. The king danced by himself; the four nobles were tied together with chains, and went through the wildest antics. Unfortunately, however, the Duc d'Orléans, curious to find out who the dancers were, approached a lighted taper too close to them. The tow caught fire, and Froissart says, 'They were burning for nearly an hour like torches.' The king's feathers caught fire from one of the torches, and he was only saved by the presence of mind of his aunt, the Duchesse de Berry, who wrapped him in her train. From the shock he received is said to date his incurable madness.

Under Louis XIII. everything was dull and sad, for the king's ill-health caused general depression. The Court life was, however, sometimes enlivened by dancing entertainments. In 1630, the Duc de Nemours arranged a ballet called 'The Gout,' in which he himself figured, sitting in an armchair and beating time with his stick. Louis XIII. also danced on the stage, with all his Court. But these performances were on the whole artificial and strained, and did not come from spontaneous gaiety.

French dancing has been divided into the 'Danse basse' and the 'Danse haute.' In the sixteenth century these divisions were rigorously kept. The 'Danse basse' was very grave, and consisted of glided steps. At the court of Charles IX. it was performed to the accompaniment of psalms. It consisted of three parts—(1) the *Danse basse* proper, (2) the *Retour*, (3) the *Tourdion*, altogether eighty bars, thirty-two for the beginning, sixteen for the return, and thirty-two for the conclusion. From Antoine d'Arena's collection, we have many musical notations of 'Danses basses,' but these are mostly of the irregular kind, i.e. of those consisting of more than eighty bars, generally in $\frac{3}{4}$ time.

The *Danses basses* were also, and more appropriately, called *Danses nobles*, on account of the dignity necessary to their performance, and also because of those who performed them, and who belonged to the Court circles. The other dances of a skipping kind were then mostly executed by clowns and mimes, and were called 'Danses par en haut' or 'baladines,' but these belong more to the acrobatic order.

The most interesting book on these old French dances, indeed the most interesting book on dancing, was written in 1588 by Jehan Tabourot, under a pseudonym, for he was a monk of Langres, and had to hide his identity. Nearly all later books borrow or quote from him. When Tabourot published his 'Orchésographie' there were still very few men who could write at all. Hence we have few details about the dances of this period, which we know must have been a very important one for choregraphic art, especially in France, for the works of the poets of the middle ages contain endless remarks on dancing festivities. Jehan Tabourot had already reached his sixty-ninth year when he wrote his 'Orchésographie,' a book full of interesting and curious remarks, one of the strangest of which is the following recommendation: 'Dancing is practised in order to see whether lovers are healthy and suitable to wed one another; at the end of the dance, the gentlemen are permitted to kiss their mistresses, in order that they may ascertain if they have agreeable breath. In this matter, besides many other good results which follow from dancing, it becomes necessary for the good governing of society.'

In the sixteenth century the influence of Italy was very marked in France. Catherine de Medicis brought with her the taste for luxurious display, for gorgeous banquets and gay festivals. The Valois liked scenic dances, such as those of Italy—allegorical, mythological, historical, and comic ballets—and these Catherine de Medicis introduced from her own country, and developed still further in France. To the grave, rather sad, and monotonous dances prevailing at that period she added others, more lively, which were altered also by the

reform of dress instituted by her. Instead of *Pavane* and *Branle*, *Gaillarde*, *Volte*, and *Courante* were the fashion. The steps became more jumping than gliding; the ladies' gowns were shortened, but there were as yet no definite rules for dancing entertainments. There was in fact a time of perfect chaos in dancing. Masked dances were held to the sound of psalms, and Diane de Poitiers danced a 'volte' (like our modern waltz) to the air of the 'De Profundis'!

Sometimes under the Valois the festivities lasted for two consecutive days, and after these great festivities were the signal for great massacres. The ball held on the eve of St. Barthélemy is an appalling instance. On October 15, 1581, occurred the Ballet de la Royne organised by Balthazarini or Beaujoyeux, who arranged or invented many of the entertainments of that epoch. He was a Piedmontese and Chamberlain to Catherine de Medicis. The ballet represented twelve geometrical figures, and the first part ended with a very lively air called 'La Clochette.'

AIR DE LA CLOCHETE (*fameux sous Henri III.*)





The hall represented Circe's gardens. It was a magnificent ballet of naiades and nymphs, of goddesses and satyrs, &c., and lasted from 10 P.M. to 4 A.M. The conclusion was somewhat novel, every lady making a present of some article of gold to her partner. This entertainment cost a sum which nowadays would represent twenty million francs.

In another entertainment given at Bayonne, the national dances of France were introduced, and thus popularised among the gentry.

The characteristic feature of all the French dances of the sixteenth century is that, as in Greece, order and proportion were always observed, and that when foreign forms, such as Spanish, Italian, or German, were adopted, even in provincial dancing they became modified in such a way that their artistic value was increased. In fact, so modified and perfect did they become that they often returned to their native land under a totally different form. At all times in France, as in Greece, dancing was regarded as part of the education of a nobleman, and during the French Revolution, when the refugees found a shelter in hospitable Britain, many of the aristocrats made use of their choregraphic talent to earn a livelihood. This may perhaps account for the fact that in the heart of the English

provinces, and in small and remote towns of Scotland, the French are still regarded as a nation of dancing-masters. Or is this notion the result of reading the old poets and romances of the Middle Ages, from whose accounts one might be led to imagine that the French had never anything better to do than to dance at all hours of the day and night? The reason of the supremacy of the French in the choregraphic art of civilised Europe may lie in the fact that, like the Italians, they had even in early times writers on the art, who tried to describe it.

The Troubadours mention many dances without giving details about them. No doubt the movements were so familiar that they thought a description of them unnecessary and useless. They often speak of the *Danse au Virlet*, a circular dance, during the performance of which each person in turn sang a verse, the chorus being repeated by all. The Courts of Love defended dancing against the clergy, and a Provençal poem has the following remark: 'Youth and gaiety opened the ball, accompanied by their sister Bravery; Cowardice, confused, went of her own accord and hid herself.' An old chronicler also relates that when the Crusaders were lying before the town of St. Jean d'Acre, the Italians beguiled the time with songs, the Spaniards with games, the Germans with feasting, the English with cock-fighting, and the French with dancing.

No doubt the influence of French dancing, especially under the Valois, has made itself felt through all European Courts, and from the higher circles has permeated into the habits of all sorts and conditions of men. Dancing is a very fugitive art; it re-echoes the fashion of the hour, and as in all matters of fashion and of taste France has always been to the front, the number of French dances is very great. We cannot enter into them all in this work, but many are worthy of a description.

The *Branle*—which later on in England became the *Brawl*—was susceptible of every possible variety, and had very quaint names. In this sport the number of performers was not limited, and all who wished to dance might join. Each gentle-



FRENCH BALL, CIRCA 1660

(From an Engraving by Abraham Bosse)

man led his lady by the right hand, sometimes holding her by her long sleeve. There was always a leader in this dance, which began with *le branle double* and *le branle simple* for aged couples. After this came the *branle gai*, something like our polka, for newly-married pairs, or for people about thirty; then the *branle bourguignon* for very young and agile dancers. The whole concluded with a *ronde*, and the times varied according to the figures. Tabourot says that in high circles 'this art so ancient, so honourable and so profitable,' was held in esteem; that the older people liked it because it gave them an opportunity to show off their agility, and the young as an exercise and an amusement.

It is noticeable that in the dances of the period the figures were ordered so as to exhibit to the fullest extent and to the best advantage the performers themselves. The highest or noblest person of the company always led the *branle*. We see this from a passage in Boccaccio, where he says, 'The Queen gave the order to begin the dance, which Lauretta was to lead, while Emilia was to sing.'

The *branle* was in 2 time; a great accomplishment in connection with it being the 'rû de vache' (the cow's kick), a sort of jerk performed with the leg. The man skilled in this accomplishment was a sort of hero in the sixteenth century.

It is not surprising that in the sixteenth century dances were so greatly in fashion, seeing that the kings themselves footed it so bravely, and that in all ages the people have delighted to imitate their sovereigns. They danced everywhere, and on the slightest occasion. It is also a point worthy of note that in times of national sorrow, of war, or of oppression, dancing is found to be always on the increase; for instance, at the time of the Valois, noblemen just returned from the battle-field would go and dance madly at Court. The balls of this period were generally held in the Salle des Cariatides in the Louvre.

Every province had its own *branle*; the Bretons called theirs '*Passepied*' or '*Trihoris*,' of which we shall have more to say later. The *Branle du Haut Barrois* was specially

reserved for attendants and waiting-maids, but was indulged in by the gentry when they disguised themselves as shepherds and shepherdesses as a pastime. There were also *branles mimés*, such as the *Branle des lavandières*, where the movement of washing clothes was imitated by hand gestures, and the *Branle des ermites*, for which monks' attire was donned. The *ronde* and game 'sur le Pont d'Avignon' is a survival of this dance, which was given in two files, the performers crossing their hands over the chest, and bowing in cadence. Real dramatic talent was required for these sixteenth-century dances. They seem indeed to have been invented quite as much for the enjoyment of the spectators as for that of the performers, who took the greatest pains to please their audience.

DANSE DE LA BASSE BRETAGNE



Another of these *branles mimes* was the *branle des flambeaux*, in which Queen Marguerite of Valois danced so exquisitely. Brantome praises her dancing, and calls her 'la plus suave dame du monde,' and Ronsard describes her as one who 'à bonds légers voloit parmy la salle.'

These dances with lighted torches were performed in various ways. Sometimes a gentleman stepped forward with a lighted taper or torch, capered once or twice round the room, then chose a lady, danced with her a moment, gave her the torch, and returned to his seat. The lady then invited a



Torch Dance at the Court of Burgundy (anno 1463)

gentleman to dance with her, handed him the torch, and the pantomime was repeated. Sometimes each dancer held a long lighted taper in his hand, and tried to blow out his neighbour's taper, at the same time protecting his own from a similar fate.

The *Torch dance* was held at great festivals until 1713, but was chiefly a wedding dance, and was in favour at Court until 1700. The step was the same as that of the '*Allemande*,' and a special interest is attached to the *branle* in connection with the folk-song. Many of these songs still existing in France date back to the dance tunes—i.e. to a time when

music freed itself from the monotonous rules of church plain-song, and adopted a rhythmic form. Many of the nursery rhymes of France are old *branles*, such as the well-known 'Marlbrough s'en va-t-en guerre,' the 'Carillon de Dunkerque,' the 'Chevalier du guet,' &c.

Arena, a Provençal poet of 1500, calls the *branle* 'congedium,' because of the movements of the dancer, which seemed to express the desire to leave off. Yet the *branle* proper was really only the beginning of the dance. Full directions are given for these dances in Tabourot's 'Orchésographie.' It is amusing to note those furnished by the good old monk as to the demeanour of male dancers in the ball-room :

> Don't bend your head down to look if your steps are well performed, but raise your head, and look about with assurance ; don't use your handkerchief more than is necessary, but if you use it, be sure it is very clean.
>
> Talk gracefully, and be well clad and shod ; be sure that the hose is pulled straight, and that the slipper is clean.
>
> You can if you wish invite two damoisels, but one will be sufficient, &c. &c.

Another of these *branles*, viz. the *Branle des Brandons*, was danced on the first Sunday in Lent, with a lighted torch in the dancer's hand. Probably this is a remnant of an old superstitious practice of the ancient Gauls. During the month of February, which was the last of the solar year, the ancient inhabitants of France ran about the forests at night with lighted torches and danced—a rite which was supposed to be one of purification, and also a ceremony which was meant to bring rest to their departed relatives and friends. It is probable that the custom was founded in a utilitarian spirit by the Druidic priests, who knew that to run about with lights in the woods would free the trees from caterpillars, which generally emerge from their eggs in Spring.

The *Tourdion*, with which the *branles* concluded, was of livelier rhythm. The *Tourdion* is the same as the *Gaillarde*, only that the latter is danced with jumping steps, while the

Tourdion is glided. These dances have five steps, hence also called *cinque-pas*. In the *Tourdion* the lady was always led by the hand, while in the *Gaillarde* everyone danced alone. Both dances had the curious and complicated old French steps, ruade, grue, &c., which are minutely described in the 'Orchésographie.'

A celebrated *Gaillarde* was the one 'Si je t'aime ou non,' in which there was much kicking and skipping. To excel in some of the steps of the *Gaillarde* was looked upon as an accomplishment equal to that of riding or fencing. Another was the 'Baisons-nous belle,' the most popular of all; 'for, says the venerable Arbeau, 'we may conjecture that the dancers found it agreeable, as it introduced a pleasant variation!'



Galliarde
(*From the Orchésographie*)

The *Tourdion* was occasionally a grotesque dance, in which a man appeared, often in the midst of a banquet, with blackened face, yellow scarf on his head, and bells on his legs, going through clownish antics.

The *Pavane*, also called *Pavenne*, and, in England, *Pavin*, *Pavon*, &c. &c., was one of the oldest 'Basses danses.' There is much dispute about the origin of the name. Does it come from Padua, or from Pavo? Is it of Spanish or of Italian origin? I think it is essentially a French dance, and one that was much performed because of its simplicity and beauty. It was mainly a Court dance, and was also called 'le grand

bal,' because it was used on State occasions, when ladies in their brocaded gowns dragged their heavy trains over the polished floors, when courtiers with their capes and swords solemnly and with knightly chivalry took off their plumed hats to do homage to their fair partners, and when even dignified magistrates in their long robes thought it not beneath their dignity to figure in the measure. It was a grand, a solemn, and a majestic dance, accompanied by a song with hautboys, while drums accentuated the rhythm. The words of the Pavane are examples of the gallant tone of the period preceding and following Henri IV. The Pavane of Henri III., 'Belle qui tiens ma vie,' is a literary gem.

The tablature of Arbeau describes the various steps, figures, and movements of the dance in so much detail that one might easily at the present time, from a study of his work, represent a *Pavane* with all accuracy. It was danced in slow time by one or two couples, sometimes by two damoisels alone. Before beginning the dance, the performers walked gravely round the room, and saluted the King and Queen, or the great dignitaries who gave the ball. The steps were simple, and were called 'advancing' and 'retreating.' Tabourot recommends that the tune should be sung by four voices, and he says it has 'two advancings and two retreatings' of 32 bars. To prolong it, it must be begun anew as long as it pleases musicians and dancers. In 'retreating,' the gentlemen walked behind their ladies, leading them by the hand ; then came a few glided steps and a great many curtseys, and everyone regained his place. In the next figure, the gentlemen alone capered backwards and forwards before their ladies, and the conclusion was a 'conversion,' or turn with them. This turn gave opportunity for the display of graceful rounding of the arm and wrist, which were raised high. Next one of the gentlemen advanced alone, and, describing a slight curve in the middle of the ball-room, went 'en se pavanant' (strutting like a peacock) to salute the lady opposite him, after which, taking some backward steps, he regained his place, bowing to his own lady.



THE PAVANE AT THE COURT OF HENRI III., CIRCA 1580

The *Pavane*, accompanied by a song during which the performers kissed each other, has left survivals in many countries. There is a sixteenth-century air, in which a trill on the musical instruments indicates that it is the moment to give the salute. Sometimes in a country gathering, in the midst of a quadrille, the significative signal is given, causing much amusement. George Sand has described such a scene, as also has Swinburne. The *Pavane* is mentioned by Rabelais as one of the 180 dances of the Queen of Lanternois.

The *Pavane d'Espagne*, said to have been invented by Ferdinand Cortez on his return from Mexico, was danced by knights in their coat of mail, and by women draped in their manta. As it was a very solemn dance, it was diversified by many gestures, and thus lost its physiognomy for a time. Later, however, it regained its original character, then again it became full of affectations. It was much danced during the reign of Louis XIV., and afterwards seems to have disappeared.

The *Courante* (Italian 'Corrente') was always a Court, never a popular, dance of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. It was often sung, and was performed on tip-toe with curved and slightly jumped steps and many curtseys; the dancer, always jumping slightly, led his lady round the room and back to her place, where, after a new obeisance, he left her.

The *Courante* has varied at different periods. In the sixteenth century it partook of the character of a pantomime, which was intended at the beginning of the ball to show off the skill and grace of the performers. Tabourot says that in his time (i.e. 1530) three young men invited three young girls, and stood 'all in a row.' The first dancer led his lady to the other end of the room, and left her there, while he returned to the others. The two other gentlemen did the same, until the ladies were all on one side of the room, the men on the other. As soon as the last had returned, the first began to adjust his dress and to hop towards his partner, who repelled him by a wave of her hand, and turned her back upon him. He then

returned to his place, making gestures of despair. (Same pantomime for the others.) The three then danced towards their ladies, begging with bended knee and uplifted hands for mercy. The ladies were kind (as they have been since the world began) and allowed their partners to put their arms round them and to dance out the *courante*.

Morley describes the Branles and Courantes of 1597. The *branle*, he says, is called the 'Brangill of Poictu,' and he adds: 'like to this, but more light, be the *voltes* and *courantes*, which being both of a measure are notwithstanding danced after sundrie fashions—the *volte* rising and leaping, the *courante* travising and running.'

Some of the *courantes* were very solemn. This was the favourite dance of Louis XIV., who is said to have performed it better than anyone else. The movements of the *courante* were so important that it was looked upon as absolutely necessary to learn it before any other dance.

Madame de Sévigné danced it at the 'fête des Etats de Bretagne.' It has been compared to the Spanish *Seguidilla*, and is by some supposed to be the parent of the waltz.

The *Menuet* (Eng., Minuet; Ital., il Minuetto; Ger., die Menuett) was a *branle* of Poitou, and was thus called because of its small steps. It was derived from the *courante*. When the pupil knew the steps of the *courante* well, when he could turn his feet properly and control his movements, he was initiated into the mysteries of the graceful and ceremonious *Menuet*, which took three months to learn, and of which there were endless varieties. Of all dances the *Menuet* has remained longest in vogue, has been most often described and written about, and represented in painting. Sénac de Meilhan says, 'Life is like a Menuet—a few turns are made in order to curtsey in the same spot from which we started.' It was the dance of ceremony, of courtesy, and of chivalry. The highest in the land, and the most dignified, have been proud to walk through a minuet.

J. J. Rousseau says that it is the least gay of the society



A STRANGE CURANTO

dances, but he probably made that disparaging remark because, according to his own confession, he was never able to master the difficulties of the dance, though he praises his own grace and shape.

The true *Menuet* was simple, dignified, noble, and graceful. A beautiful woman dancing the measure turned the heads of all onlookers. Don John of Austria, Viceroy of the Netherlands, travelled incognito to Paris merely to see Marguerite de Bourgogne dance a *Menuet*.

Count Moroni remarks that in the *Menuet* the eighteenth century was truly portrayed. It was, so to speak, the expression of that Olympic calm and universal languor which characterised everything, even the pleasures of society. In 1740 the social dances of France were as stiff as the old French gardens, and marked by an elegant coolness, prudery, and modesty. The pastime was not even called 'dancing.' People spoke of it as 'Tracer les chiffres d'amour,' and no such commonplace expression as violin was used during this stilted period. The musical instruments which accompanied the dance were called 'les âmes des pieds.' The historical importance of the *Menuet* is instanced by the fact that it has not become obsolete, but still holds a place in the symphony.

It was introduced into Paris in 1650, and was set to music by Lulli in 1653. Louis XIV. did the composer the honour of dancing it in public. The best idea of the importance of dancing at the Court of Louis XIV. can be gained from Molière, who says in the 'Bourgeois Gentilhomme' that the destiny of nations depends on the art of dancing. Louis XIV. did not disdain to busy himself with the composition of ballets; n y, he danced in them himself, and took dancing lessons from E auchamps for twenty years. He danced with professional ballet dancers until he was thirty-two, when, his figure having become less supple, he renounced the pleasure. Some say that he was struck by some verses in Racine's 'Britannicus,' in which Nero's dramatic proclivities are ridiculed. Be that as it may, his last appearance was on February 13, 1669, in the Ballet of

Flora. In 1662 a royal academy of dancing had been founded in Paris, and Beauchamps received two years later the title of 'Directeur de l'Académie de l'Art de la Danse.'

Mr. Scott in his work, 'The Art of Dancing,' says that the rules about the Menuet would fill a volume, but that there are five requisites for making a good figure in the dance—a languishing eye, a smiling mouth, an imposing carriage, innocent hands, and ambitious feet. The primary figure in the *Menuet* was an S, but it became more elegant and more beautiful when the dancer Pécourt changed its figure to that of a Z. The real *Menuet* is in $\frac{3}{4}$ time, and has four steps. These four steps, however, really form one only, consisting of four movements, and one walking step on tip-toe. Very full descriptions of the manner of dancing it may be found in Compan's Dictionary. It is owing to the *Menuet* that French choregraphy has taken the precedency of all other forms, and for a century and a half every state ball in Europe was opened with a *Menuet*. It was called the queen of dances, and will, I think, still keep its supremacy for a long time to come, although in modern times it has been employed



Giving one hand in a 'Menuet'
(*From an Engraving after B. Dandridge, 1737*)

more as a theme for purely musical composition than as a dance.

There were four *Menuets*, viz.—'Le Menuet du Dauphin,' 'Le Menuet de la Reine,' 'Le Menuet d'Exaudet,' and 'Le Menuet de la Cour.' The 'Menuet de la Cour' was the usual dance, and was in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries



Lady giving both hands in a 'Menuet'
(*From an Engraving after B. Dandridge*, 1777)

what the quadrille is, or rather what it ought to be, to us. If we read the Memoirs of the period, we see what importance was attached to the *Menuet*, how seriously noblemen took Marcel's famous words, 'Que de choses dans un menuet!' and how much the ladies looked down upon a man who was not skilled in the measure. In those days of chivalrous feeling towards women every man tried to obtain

the favour of the ladies, and therefore every man tried to learn the *Menuet.* Men of to-day, who live in an atmosphere of steam and electricity, and are ever in a hurry, can scarcely realise how their ancestors could take the trouble to study the intricate steps and positions of these dances 'full of state and ancientry,' with their ever-recurrent curtseys and bows; but,



Gentleman 'Walking' the Menuet
(*From an Engraving after Watteau*)

as I have said before, the dance of a country is always attuned to the hour. When the *Menuet* was usual men had still leisure to be gallant, and still time to be courteous.

Costume was not an indifferent agent in such dances. When a man had to take off his three-cornered hat, put it under his arm, bow low and kiss the fair bejewelled hand extended to him, it all took time, and the interval had to be



THE MENUET, 1720

filled by a compliment—'Fair lady, your cheeks are like the roses of May,' or some such saying which would increase the roses in the beautiful face. I am afraid our own period, with its hurried 'How do you do?' and its casual 'Good mornings' and 'Good evenings'—said in such a way as to show plainly that our neighbours' mornings and evenings, good or bad, are a matter of absolute indifference to us—contrasts ill with the times of the *Menuet*. Ours is an age of polka and pas de quatre. I doubt whether the dance forms of the nineteenth century will find artists to represent them on canvas, as the *Menuets* and *Gavottes* have been represented by Watteau, Lancret, Millais, and so many others, or whether they will inspire such musical compositions as those of Mozart and other great masters.

MENUET DU DAUPHIN




3
tr



The *Gavotte* was originally a peasant's dance, and takes its name from Gap,[1] in Dauphiné. It was introduced at Court in the sixteenth century, when, to amuse the Royal circles, entertainments were given consisting of dances in national costume, performed by natives of the various provinces, and to the sound of appropriate instruments. The Brittany passe-pied was danced to the music of the violin, the branle of Poitou to the bagpipe, the danse de Navarre to the drum, the rigaudon of Provence to the tambourine ; the danses de Bourgogne and de Champagne to the hautboy.

The *Gavotte* was also introduced into Paris, and was in 1600 and 1700 remodelled according to the fashion and taste of the period. The oldest *Gavotte* we have is in the 'Orchéso-

[1] The inhabitants of Gap are called '*Gavots.*'

graphie,' but the music is not adapted to the dance in its more modern form, nor are the figures suitable to our customs. Arbeau, for example, tells the dancer not to lift his lady partner into the air, but only to kiss her while performing sundry small leapings in 2 time.

In the *Gavotte* the dancers stood in a row or a circle, and, after a few capers, a couple danced alone, and saluted each other with a kiss. The lady then kissed all the men in turn, her partner at the same time kissing all the other ladies.

When this dance became modified it lost its merry character, and was rather stiff and affected, something like the Menuet. It has indeed been called the offspring of the Menuet. It was usual at one time to offer the ladies a posy instead of a kiss. The *Gavotte* was a tender dance until it became a stage dance, performed only by professionals. Two celebrated theatrical gavottes are those of Gluck and of Grétry, especially the latter, which became quite the rage. It was Marie Antoinette who brought back the *Gavotte* into fashion as a court and society dance.

After the Revolution the old *Gavotte* was revived, but was not liked. Gardel, a celebrated dancer, composed a new Gavotte on Grétry's air, and it was danced to perfection by Trémis. It was, however, not a favourite at balls, partly because it attracted attention only to two or four people, and partly because we have lately become so envious of other people's talents. Formerly we were content to sit and watch those who could dance with beauty and grace ; now we are more egotistical—we must dance ourselves, even if we have not the least skill, and even if the room is so crowded that toes are trodden upon and gowns torn to pieces. The *Gavotte* which still exists to-day, and has been called 'La Danse classique,' was invented by Vestris. The name of 'danse classique' was given to it because its steps and figures are so beautifully arranged that it would be impossible to find a better order, yet the dance can be performed with simple as well as with complicated steps. The old gavottes were formerly a collection of



THE GAVOTTE, 1780

branles, chosen by the musicians. In later times, i.e. after the Revolution, the dancing-masters made a duet dance of them, with thirteen variations, following a prelude and a conclusion consisting of Menuet curtseys of eight bars.

All traditional popular songs of France, even the gravest, were originally dance tunes. The sad songs have long ago ceased to fulfil that purpose, but the livelier ones exist even to-day. The songs composed by Eustache du Canroy for Charles IX. were originally dance airs, mainly Gavottes. The same tunes now exist in France as Christmas carols.

A typical dance-song, and at the same time a typical popular French song, is the one given in the 'Grande Encyclopédie'—'En passant par la Lorraine :'



1. En passant par la Lorraine,
Rencontrai trois capitaines
Avec mes sabots dondaine
Oh ! oh ! oh !
Avec mes sabots.
2. En passant par la Lorraine
Rencontrai trois capitaines :
Ils m'ont appelée vilaine.
Je ne suis pas si vilaine
Puisque le fils du Roi m'aime ;
Il m'a donné pour étrenne
Un bouquet de marjolaine :
S'il fleurit je serai reine,
S'il y meurt je perds ma peine.

The refrains of the dance songs are onomatopœiæ, or mimologisms, representing the rhythm, the voice and the movements of the dance. 'La-la, tra-la' is most frequent. Béranger's 'Tra-la, la, la, les demoiselles,' and Roi d'Yvetot's 'Oh ! oh ! oh ! oh ! ah ! ah ! ah ! ah ! Quel bon petit Roi c'était là,' 'Lon-lan-la' and 'ô gué,' are refrains of old dance-songs, as are also 'Larira-larirette, landeridette,' &c ; for instance, in the 'Quand

on n'a rien, landeridette, On ne saurait manger son bien' of Béranger.

These refrain forms are similar to the English 'tol de rol' and 'down derry down;' but though Italy and Germany have also their 'fal la la,' their 'hallo' and 'juchhe,' France is the country richest in songs with refrains, in popular songs, and in dance-songs.

Different customs prevail in different parts of France.

The festival of St. John, the Christian substitute for the Druidic Sun-feast, is still kept up in Brittany. Fires blaze on every hill-top, and the inhabitants dance round them all night to the sound of their native instrument, a rustic kind of hautboy, called the biniou. The maid who dances round St. John's fires nine times before midnight is sure to marry within the year.

There is something of the humour and pathos of the Irish temperament to be found in Brittany. The Breton gives himself up fully to the merriment of the wedding or fair, and to all the fun which makes part of the 'Pardons,' yet his Celtic origin leads him to celebrate in preference sad ceremonials.

Of these 'Pardons' M. de Villemarqué has given us some details. They last about three days, and have often been described and painted. Bells toll early; the chapels and altars are decorated with flowers; statues of saints are clad in national dress, and offerings of corn, flax, sheepskins, and cakes are brought to the tutelary saint, as in the old Pagan times gifts were brought to the idol. Dancing begins to the sound of the traditional biniou, while near the chapel or the fountain sits the orchestra on a moss-grown dolmen. The peasants cannot always, however, have an orchestra. Occasionally they wish to dance a ronde or passe-pied and no *Sonneur* is present, in lieu of whom they take an ivy-leaf, roll it round and whistle into it, holding it between their teeth. Some sing while others dance, or they sing and dance together. The importance of the song in popular dancing is a vast subject, the study of which would bring to light many interesting details, especially if we traced it from the nursery rhyme to the dance on the green.

A curious old dance tune of Brittany is 'The Wine of the Gauls and the Dance of the Sword,' of which the music, taken from M. de la Villemarqué's collection is here appended :—

GWIN AR CHALLAOUED


Allegretto féroce
Gwell - eo gwin gwenn bar Na-mou - ar ; Gwelleo gwin gwenn bar.
f
Tan ! tan ! dir ! oh ! dir ! tan ! tan ! dir ! ha ! tan ! Taun ! taun !
ff
Tir ha toun ! toun ! taun ! Tir ha tir ha taun.

In former times there existed a Celtic sword dance in honour of the Sun, with a chorus invoking fire and snow, oak, earth and waves. The young men moved about in a circle, throwing their swords into the air, catching them in rhythm, and forming with the sword-points a circular figure called The Rose. This wild and warlike dance has been described by Olaus Magnus and by Tacitus, and references will be found to it in the accounts of the dances of Northumberland and of Scotland.

The dancing games which were held round the Celtic monuments during the summer solstice vividly recall those ceremonies which took place in Brittany, and which the Gaelic bards have commemorated. They must have existed in Armorica in all their purity up to the fifth century, for we find the Acts of the Council of Vannes forbidding the pastimes.

Every Saturday afternoon in June, at 4 o'clock, men and women gather round some dolmen ; the youths wear green ears of corn in their hats, and the girls flowers of flax. A 'master' is chosen to lead the feast, usually the handsomest and most skilful of the dancers. This fortunate person chooses a girl as queen of the day, and places a silver ring on her finger.

The inauguration of a new threshing-floor is also a day of great rejoicing in Brittany. The following is a description of the custom, as given by Tom Taylor in his translation of Villemarqué :—

When a new threshing-floor is required, the farmer's neighbours all arrive with clay and barrels full of water. Horses, all beribboned, are brought, and are driven round and round to work the clay and water into a mass of the required consistency. Sometimes a table is placed in the centre of the new floor, a chair is set on it, and the prettiest girl is kept a prisoner there, and is not released except on payment of some merry forfeit. A week afterwards, when the clay is hardened, the new floor becomes a ballroom, and long chains of dances or rounds of young girls, carrying on their heads full milk-pails, or crocks filled with flowers, whirl

merrily about to the music of rote or bagpipe. The favourite figures are those interminable interlacings, which may be seen at some Cornish festivals, notably on Furry Day at Helston, or at Penzance on the Eves of St. John and St. Peter. The dance is often followed by wrestling matches—always a Celtic sport.

The composition of the dance-songs of Brittany is usually the result of collaboration. Sometimes the dance itself stirs the imagination of the improvisers, the subjects being furnished from history or from legend. The peasant is fond of the fantastical—the marvellous has a powerful fascination for him. This man of Nature is really the very opposite of a realist; the ideal is his true domain. Gnomes and sprites, fairies and dwarfs haunt the woods, and rocks, and streams of Brittany; the Korrigans play round the fountains, and specially round the springs near the dolmens, and the doings of these aërial beings give rise to the ballad and the dance. Dancing is not always, however, their vocation. In some parts of Brittany this gives way to the more exciting business of stealing children. The dwarfs also dance their fantastic round in and out among the Celtic monuments, the song to their orbicular chorus being Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday.' They must not say Saturday and Sunday—days of bad omen for fairies. Woe to the traveller who passes near them in the night-watches! He is driven into the ring, and must dance till he drops dead. Their great day is the first Wednesday in May.

If we pass from Brittany to Normandy, we find that the popular dances most in vogue there at all times are the *branle* and the *ronde*. In all the verses belonging to the dance we find interesting historical indications. Take, for instance, 'La Chanson du mois de Mai.' We see in it that the arrival of the cuckoo appears to cause the dislike, now almost universal, to marrying in May.

Jeunes gens qu'êtes à marier,
Oh! ne vous mariez pas dans le mois de mai;
J'ai vu le coucou! ! ! mé, mé.
J'ai vu le coucou! ! ! mé, mé.

The Karoles (the Christmas carol) were early introduced into Normandy, as also that remarkable production of essentially French irony, the *Vau de Vire* (or '*Passe-caille*'), which later on became the Vaudeville. When, under Louis XII., the Tribunal de l'Echiquier was made into a parliament, some great festivities took place in Rouen, about which the poet sings :—

> Faisons banquets, et nous esiouissons,
> Avec buts, rebecs, flûtes, tambours,
> Harpes, flageols, basses, danses, chansons
> *Hays* de Rouen, en salles et en cours,
> Les *triborés* et *bransles*, qui ont courts
> Pour l'Echiquier, qui est cour souveraine.

The study of these subjects has now become very difficult, for there are now few national dances performed in Normandy. Only children seem to keep up the popular 'rondes' in their games. The true *branle*, which we still find now and again in remote villages of Normandy, has unfortunately a song inclined to be coarse, and its themes are mostly about matrimonial disillusions. It is nevertheless interesting to note how everywhere and at all times dancing has been one of the necessities of human nature. We can do without great pageants and brilliant orchestras ; we can exist without skilled tip-toe dancing ballet-girls, but we must have music in some form or other, and we must have dancing almost as much as we must have bread and water. These primary necessities are developed and refined by civilisation, but are not destroyed.

The *branle carré*, the *rigodai*, &c., are still kept up at village festivals. In the department of the Ain these dancing entertainments are called 'Vogues,' and take place in a farm court, a barn, or a meadow, to the shrill sound of the bagpipe.

The great favourite is still the *ronde*, with its lively refrain and its quaint themes, such as that of the three ladies who dress their hair by candle-light, of the nightingale as a messenger, and the king's son in love with the shepherdess. True flowers of native poetry are these, wild, simple, and fragrant

as thyme and rosemary, dances and songs which to see and hear recall the days of childhood and make one live one's youth again

DANCE-SONG OF THE AIN ('VIREZ-VOUS, TOURNEZ-VOUS')



Oh ! lou la virez-vous,
Oh ! lou la tournez-vous,
Oh ! lou la vite, vite,
Oh ! lou la tournant-toujours,
Oh ! lou la virez-vous,
Oh ! lou la tournez-vous.

The *Bourrée* belongs to the Auvergne and the Berri, and has been danced at Court ever since its introduction under Catherine de Medicis in 1565. The dancers here stand opposite one another, and there are various steps, e.g. the 'pas de bourrée' in two movements, and the 'pas de fleurets.' There were also the 'pas de bourrée ouvert,' and the 'pas de bourrée emboîté.'

Songs accompanied this dance, and often replaced the instrumental music. They were popular, and of strongly accentuated rhythm. At the present time in Auvergne one can see peasants dancing and singing, for hours together, short airs repeated again and again without a pause.

(Rhythm $\frac{2}{4}$ )

The *bourrée* is a dance of a careless form. It is a skipping dance, and can therefore only be danced with short skirts. Marguerite of Valois liked it, because it gave her the chance of showing her feet and ankles, which were marvels of beauty.

Notwithstanding the efforts made at various periods to introduce the *bourrée* as a society or as a scenic dance, it has never found much favour; it is now essentially a local dance of peasants, and is performed with clogs. It is astonishing to see how the clumsy Auvergnat, the traditional Paris water-carrier and porter, becomes lively and light when he dances the bourrée, how his heavy frame moves in cadence, and how the clogs fall together with a precision which a well-drilled regiment might envy, while an occasional shout of 'You-you' is heard. Sir Arthur Sullivan gives a good example of the modern *bourrée* in his music to the 'Merchant of Venice,' but here is a local tune:

BOURRÉE D'AUVERGNE





Dancing among French peasants is the first of all pleasures. The country yokel, so heavy and awkward in other matters, finds for the dance agility and vivacity. This pastime brings him forgetfulness of his labours, and the satisfaction of self-love. The village dance is the first step towards culture, for it requires strength and grace, and a certain bravery and neatness of dress. It makes movements less rough, and turns the boor into a polished being.

LA ROBINE

(*French Peasant's Dance*)

Prätorius, Terpsichore 1612



In every province of France dancing has been held in honour. As we travel from north to south, we find that dancing assumes livelier forms, and that the dances are lighter and more supple. In the Landes the peasants caper about with delight, while the 'ménétrier' on his stilts plays on fife and drum. Racine, travelling in Southern France, was quite surprised to find bare-footed peasants making curtseys as well as if they had all their lives learned the arts of grace and deportment. Perhaps they may have imbibed some of the traditions of their ancestors the

Greeks, as a few of the dances are very similar to those still found in the Archipelago. The Candiote is performed in Provence, as it is in Greece and in Asia Minor, and in Dauphiné there is a sort of Pyrrhic dance.[1]

One of the customs of Provence is for the gentleman to invite his partner by offering her a pretty packet of pins, after the reception of which every girl is willing to whirl about like a windmill. Goldsmith, travelling along the borders of the Loire, played the flute to make the villagers dance. He played to such purpose that matrons and grey-haired men turned out with maids and youths to take part in the measure. Sterne, when in Touraine, liked to see the grandfather who has given him shelter bring out his *vielle* and play on it, while his aged spouse sang an ancient dance-tune, and the children disported themselves on the lawn. Mirabeau describes frequently how the peasants, after their rough daily toil, danced in the moonlight, to the sound of fife and drum. It seems as if the voluntary exercise gave rest from imposed labour. Everything affords a pretext for dancing to the rustics—the harvesting of the corn, the gathering of the chestnuts in Poitou or of the olives in Provence, or a vintage rejoicing, all finish with a dance. The women caper about with their arms a-kimbo; the men tread the measure with heavy accentuation, their iron-clad boots falling in time to the rhythm. Then they slowly lift first one leg and then the other, clapping their hands below the knees with loud yells.

Weddings above all give rise to a dance, as also festivals held for saints' days and fairs. Every province of France has a different name for its village feasts; but whether at the *Ducasses* or Kermesses of the North, at the *Vogues* of Dauphiné, or the *Pardons* of Brittany, at the *Apports* of Berry, the *Romerages* of Provence, or the *ballades* or *gros fromages* of Poitou, after the Mass is over comes a banquet, and after the banquet a dance. The old French proverb says, 'Après la panse (feast) vient la danse.'

[1] The Dauphiné dance is called 'Bacchu-ber.'

In some parts there existed the belief that the tutelary saint favoured the sports, and youths and maidens went to fetch the banner, and fixing it on a lance, made it preside over the entertainment. In 1661 this custom was abolished by the clergy. In French Flanders it is still the custom to dance at the funeral of a young man or girl. The youths of the neighbourhood gather together and dance all night, rejoicing that a comrade has died while still in the age of innocence.

DANS DER MAEGDEKENS [1]


Allegro
In den he - mel is ee - nen dans, al - le - lu - i - a ;
daer dan - sen all' de maeg - de - kens, be - ne - di - ca - mus Do - mi-
no, al - le - lu - i - a, al - le - lu - i - a. 't Is voor A - me - li
a, al - le - lu - i - a. Wy dan-sen naer de maeg-de-kens, be-ne-di-
ca - mus Do - mi - no, al - le - lu - i - a, al - le - lu - i - a,

Sometimes the dancing entertainment became a matter of obligation—a feudal 'handsel' or earnest, as when the Lord of the Manor made his first appearance in the village, it was obligatory to offer a song to his lady, and to dance before him. Little by little noblemen and vassals became less familiar with one another, and their merry duties were converted into pecuniary indemnities, which it may be suspected the peasants acquitted with less pleasure.

[1] A funeral dance of French Flanders.

The aristocracy of former times had a wonderful activity for pleasure, and were very sociable. In spite of bad roads and defective means of communication, they would travel a hundred miles in a shaky carriage to join a dancing entertainment; and this exuberance also affects the peasant, who not only is a spectator in the festivals, but also an active agent. Madame de Sévigné, who was a great dancer herself, and who excelled in the passe-pied, gives a ball at the Château des Rochers, and all take part in it. *Sonneux* (musicians) of Brittany and dancers perform passe-pied, menuet, and courante. Another noble lady arranges a water festival in which country lads and lasses all be ribbonned dance and play tambourines. Towards the end of the reign of Louis XV. pastoral entertainments were highly in vogue, and 'paysanneries' were arranged on every possible occasion.

Some dances were held for special occasions—one, for instance, on April 23, by all the inhabitants of the villages close to where Marius defeated the Teutons. They went to a hill called Ste Victoire, and built up a pyre, lighted it, and danced around with flower-crowned heads. The clergy were always averse to these entertainments, which unfortunately often ended in drunken brawls, and they took all available measures to abolish dancing on Sundays and on feast-days, recommending their rustic parishioners to recreate themselves by attending church services, by reading and walking. But this is not compatible with peasant nature; the rest from labour consists in forgetting it, and to uncultivated minds recreation must always take the form of violent pastimes. 'Holiday-making,' says the labourer, 'is to the year what the noonday oats are to the horse.' The feast-days rejoice the youths, who under the eye of their elders divert themselves and become more sociable; they afford an opportunity for making an offer of marriage, and bring together again estranged friends.

In studying the question of rural sports we find that they decrease in proportion as the welfare of the peasant increases. The well-to-do peasant neglects ancient customs. Goldsmith, in the 'Vicar of Wakefield,' says that the poorest of the French

peasants are the merriest, and that their merriment is always in relation to their wants. A full description of rural French festivals, given in a charmingly quaint form, will be found in the poem called 'La Feste du Village,' by Gauchet (1583). It describes the Fête de Beauval on St. Samson's day, and tells us how the guests arrive at dawn, how the housewife has prepared for their arrival, how they all go and hear early Mass, how a large breakfast is then eaten, and how they go and hear Mass again. Then comes dinner at the farm, and after dinner the old men sing the praises of past times till the youths, accompanied by two fiddlers, enter the hall and invite the farmer's daughter to tread a measure. All is ready for the dance. In the middle of the lawn is a tree hung with jewels and mirrors, purses and gloves, sashes and belts, and a scarf and a knife for the man or girl who dances best. Amongst them is a clumsy one, who dances 'sans nulle cadence,' while another knows how to figure in a cinque pas. A third does best because he has been to Paris and,

> Au lieu d'étudier, allait le temps passer
> Dessous maître François, pour apprendre à danser.

The author, continuing, describes what we should now call a 'pas de deux,' in which Michault jumps in the air, and Marion jumps too. Michault kisses Marion, and gives her a posy. Marion, as is the way of women, is not grateful for this favour, and at once chooses another partner. Then comes the distribution of prizes, during which eight players, divided into two sets, have a tennis match. Claude Gauchet was Prior of Autheuil in Valois. It has already been remarked that only churchmen know how to describe dancing with accents of truth.

The *Farandole* is the popular dance of the South of France, as the Bourrée is the popular dance of the Centre. It has been said by some to be a survival of the Geranos of ancient Greece, or to have been imported into Marseilles by the Phocians of Asia Minor. Other archæologists say that the

word Farandola comes from the German *Fahrende*, i.e. a troop of ambulating actors.

The *Farandole* is performed in the following manner :— A youth, necessarily a bachelor (no married man is allowed the privilege), preceded by fife and drum, holds a handkerchief or a ribbon to his partner; she, again, takes hold of the handkerchief of another man, and a human chain of indefinite length is thus formed. The leader waves his handkerchief, and by this means leads all the figures of the dance, the whole troop obeying this flag-signal implicitly. On the order of the leader, the chain of men and women begins to move, running through field and street, through village and town, and increasing in number as they go on. All this performance takes place to the noisy accompaniment of the drum and the shrill accents of the fife, and the chain forms its serpentine undulations and windings and zigzags, according to the pleasure of the leader. Sometimes a couple lift their arms, and the others must all pass under the arch thus formed, as in the nursery game of oranges and lemons. Sometimes the last couple stop suddenly, and all the others must wind round this stem till movement becomes impossible, and the leader in a skilful way begins to unwind the human reel. Occasionally the leader performs extravagant capers and antics, which everyone must imitate exactly. When these dances are held at night, they are even more picturesque, as each dancer carries a Venetian lantern, which gives the appearance of so many will-o'-the-wisps.

Generally the *farandole* is danced as a rejoicing over family events, such as christenings, marriages, and births. It seems a pity that this charming dance should have some tragic stories connected with it, that it should have become an occasion for satisfying fanatic hatreds and party feelings, and should have been stained with blood, as in the farandole in which General Ramel was assassinated at Toulouse in 1815, to the cry of 'Vive le Roi!' In these terrible farandoles every Bonapartist was whirled in the round. Woe to him whose arm

was not strong enough, whose feet were not skilled enough to resist the pushing of the throng. If he fell to the ground, he was mercilessly trodden to death.

Daudet, in 'Numa Roumestan,' gives a beautiful description of a farandole, got up on the spur of the moment in the old amphitheatre of Aps in Provence. Valmajour, the tambourinaire, has been playing, when a cry is made, 'La farandole!' In an instant the circus is filled with a crowd of villagers, a motley medley of white scarves and gay skirts, of ribbons and lace, of blouses and vests. A trill on the 'galoubet' makes the whole mass undulate, and the farandole, led by a lad from Brabantane, the birthplace of famous dancers, slowly begins to move. Suddenly the head of the dance appeared between the arcs of the first row, while the tambourinaire and the last farandoleurs were still in the circus. As it proceeded the farandole increased, all those carried away by the rhythm feeling bound to join. Daudet continues to paint in words how the long chain reached the highest rows of the amphitheatre, how beneath the archways of the old building the dancers with their grave faces formed silhouettes, reminding him of some old basso-relievo in an ancient ruined temple.

Another dance of Provence, similar to the farandole, is *Les Olivettes*, in which the dancers, crowned with flowers and wearing gay ribbons, form a serpentine chain round three trees, and dance until they are quite exhausted. 'Allons, allons, Annette, Dansons les Olivettes,' says the old song.

La Chaconne is a Spanish dance, adopted by the French people, and transformed by them into a social dance. Musical composers have also done much to alter its character. It was generally the concluding dance of a ball, in which the dancers used to stand in two lines, the gentlemen on one side, the ladies on the other. They danced at the same time, but each group performed different figures. From time to time the leader performed a solo step, or a 'pas de deux,' and finally all the dancers met together for a last figure. The movement of this dance was slow, and in $\frac{3}{4}$ time. A good account of it will be

found in Rousseau's 'Dictionary of Music.' He says that the beauty of the *Chaconne* consists in the choice of songs which will indicate the movement. Anyone who wishes to know the exact steps of the *Chaconne* must be referred to Compan's Dictionary.

In the eighteenth century the beautiful old social dances disappeared, or were modified and took more or less of their present form. Grave and difficult dances were given up, and *la Contredanse*, which was much more easy, came into favour. Anglomania favoured the introduction of British jigging dance forms. The *Contredanse* is said to have originated in Normandy, whence it is supposed to have passed into England with William the Conqueror. It spread all over Europe, and was very usual in 1600. Long forgotten and neglected in France, it reappeared suddenly in 1745, in the fifth act of an opera-ballet of Rameau, and so charmed the Parisians that from the stage it came into the drawing-room. It has since changed into the *Quadrille*, but the dance is still the same. The name is supposed to be a corruption of *country*-dance. It would, however, be tedious to elucidate this matter. What is certain is that the *Courante* disappeared, that the Menuet became quicker and quicker till it also vanished, and that the *Quadrille* came into vogue.

The history of the *Quadrille* is very interesting. Originally a card game played by four people, it has since passed through various forms. Each of its figures has some curious import, and formerly every figure had its appropriate step, as, for instance, 'la poule,' in which the clucking of a hen was imitated. To-day there are no steps in the quadrille, and a nonchalant walk is the fashion.

In spite of the variety of *Quadrille* and *Lancers* figures, the *Contredanse* alone could not form the programme of a ball, and, the old French forms being neglected, German gyratory movements were often introduced.

The French *Quadrille* can be danced by two, by four, or any number of couples. No matter how many the number

the couples only dance with their vis-à-vis, without troubling about the others. The orchestra plays the music of the first



The Quadrille.—Figure 1 : Le Pantalon
(*From Heath's 'Northern Looking-Glass,'* 1825)



The Quadrille.—Figure 2 : L'Eté
(*From Heath's 'Northern Looking-Glass,'* 1825)

figure twice, and of the others four times, and the dancers wait for the eight introductory bars, instead of dancing. The

names of the figures are: (1) Le pantalon; (2) l'été; (3) la poule; (4) la pastourelle or la trénise; (5) la finale.



The Quadrille.—Figure 3: La Poule
(*From Heath's 'Northern Looking-Glass,'* 1825)



The Quadrille.—Figure 4: La Trénise
(*From Heath's 'Northern Looking-Glass,'* 1825)

The last has many variations, either with a chassé-croisé, or with 'la boulangère,' 'la corbeille,' 'le moulinet,' or 'la

Ste Simonienne,' and the dance often closes with a galop.

The American form of the quadrille is very recent, and rather too lively for general use in drawing rooms. Its variations are according to the caprice of fashion.

The figures are—(1) La promenade; (2) les moulinets; (3) les chevaux de bois; (4) la passe; (5) la corbeille.

A celebrated quadrille was that organised by Madame de Genlis in the drawing-room of Madame de Crenay, who, in spite of being very stout, was an enthusiastic dancer. During the eighteenth century people in France delighted in proverbs. They were the rage of fashion, and no festival or party was held without them. The quadrille arranged by Madame de Genlis



The Quadrille.—Figure 5: La Finale
(*From Heath's 'Northern Looking-Glass,* 1825)

was a 'quadrille des proverbes,' the proverbs being represented in mimic fashion.

Musard, a celebrated and talented musician of fifty years ago, and the leader of the orchestra in the Paris Opéra, reformed the quadrille from a musical point of view, and freed it from its vulgar and often 'banal' character. When the true artist appears on the scene he regenerates, and gives a new value to things which before were only of secondary interest. Musard did this for the quadrille. After him, unfortunately, it again fell into inartistic hands.

This dance, in which nowadays so many people look bored, can be seen to greatest advantage in a very large hall like that of the Opéra. A wonderful collection of quadrilles, compiled at the time when there was a perfect mania for new arrangements, is the collection known as 'Stabat Mater Quadrilles,' arranged on Rossini's great work.

The inhabitants of Roussillon are passionately fond of dancing, and have some dances peculiar to themselves. The men generally begin a country dance by a contre-pas, the air of which is said to be of Greek origin ; the women then mingle in the dance, when they jointly perform several figures, passing one among the other, and occasionally turning each other round. At a particular change in the air the male dancer must dexterously raise his partner and place her on his hand in a sitting posture. Accidents sometimes happen upon these occasions, and the lady falls to the ground, amidst the jokes and laughter of her companions. One of these dances, called *lo salt*,[1] is performed by four men and four women. At the given signal the cavaliers simultaneously raise the four ladies to form a pyramid, the caps of the ladies making the apex.

The orchestra which accompanies these dances consists of lo flaviol, a sort of flageolet, a drum, two hautboys, prima and tenor, and the cornemuse, called in the country *lo gratta*. This instrument, by its description, must somewhat resemble the bagpipes. The dance called *Segadilles* is performed with the

[1] Probably the *Salta* of Queen Elizabeth.

greatest rapidity at the end of every couplet, for the airs are short and numerous ; the female dancers are raised, and seated on the hands of their partners.

The *Carmagnole*, which is said to derive its name from a small town in Piedmont taken by the French, became a sort of revolutionary 'ronde,' danced by the populace in 1792.[1] This revolutionary ballad of thirteen verses was composed after August 10, 1792, and is a recital of the events of that day on which the *fédérés* of Marseilles played such an important part. These *fédérés* wore a vest known as the 'carmagnole,' from which costume the name of the dance doubtless comes. In the ballad Marie Antoinette is called 'Madame Véto.' The verses were gradually added by the populace, according to the political events.

LE CHANT DE LA CARMAGNOLE



[1] As Carmagnola was only taken by the French in 1796, the above derivation cannot be correct.

The dance has been truly described by Dickens in his 'Tale of Two Cities,' where he calls it 'fallen sport.' The *Carmagnole* was an immense 'ronde' which people sang while they danced; at first they turned slowly, stamping their feet, then after the refrain they went faster and faster.

It seems at first sight extraordinary that a people who for three centuries led the fashion in Europe, and who invented the stately *Menuet*, should also have been the inventors of the *Carmagnole*[1] and the *Cancan*.

But the dances of a country truly portray the character of its people, and France has always been a country of caprice and contrast. The highly gifted, cultured Parisians sank to the lowest depths in the Days of Terror, when the *Carmagnole* meant a signal for wholesale murder and incredible atrocities. It may not be out of place to make a distinction here between Paris and France. Paris is accused of many evils, but we must remember that it is the meeting-place of pleasure-seekers from all parts of the world, and is therefore cosmopolitan in character. The *Cancan* may be called a Parisian dance, but it is not a French dance, and is performed as much for the benefit (?) of travellers through the metropolis as for that of the Parisians. The word itself relates, I believe, to the waddling movements of a duck. The dance is the offspring of the *chahut*, a dance about which some curious details are given in a little book by Lépitre, written in 1844.

About 1830, a stage dancer called Mazarié played the part of a monkey in the Théâtre de la Porte St.-Martin. He invented for the occasion a figure-dance which he called 'chahut,' which surpassed in its extravagance the wildest movements of the Hottentots. Though forbidden by Government (perhaps *because* it was forbidden), it was introduced into all public balls, and Government inspectors were appointed, whose

[1] In 1883 two new verses, said to have been composed by the Nihilist Prince Kropotkin, were added to the *Carmagnole*:

Au jour de la Révolution
Tous les moyens nous serons bons (bis) &c.

duty it was to arrest the performers of the Cancan, and to fine or imprison them. But, as we have seen throughout in the history of dancing, edicts and anathemas are useless against it.

Plato in early times expressed his opinion that all unseemly dancing should be banished from well-ordered States. Unfortunately, censors and moralists have no influence over matters which are the result of spontaneous feeling. It is highly to be deplored that the spontaneous promptings of the cultured Parisians, the Athenians of to-day, should translate themselves into an imitation of the antics of a dancing monkey, as such performances will conduce to the degeneracy of the art of dancing. Such ugly and vulgar forms of the art can only be eradicated by discountenancing them altogether, for they live solely by the applause they receive, and will soon die out if ignored. It is to be regretted that British and Germans and others who sermonise so strongly on the evils of the *Cancan* should give the sanction of their presence to its performance.

THE OLDEST FRENCH DANCE TUNE




quette sans contrainte et sans fa - çon ; ah ! c'est
ainsi qu'il faut faire. Je pen - se qu'ils ont rai -
son. Soyons en - semble, Commère, com' Ro -
bin et Mari - on, soyons en - semble, Com-
mère, com' Ro - bin et Mari - on.

CHAPTER IX

THE DANCE IN GERMANY, HOLLAND, BELGIUM, SCANDINAVIA, AND LAPLAND

GERMANY

An interesting and detailed work on the dance in Germany has been written in German by Boehme, to whom I am indebted for many of my facts, and to this authority I would refer the reader for more minute accounts of German dances, above all for a rare collection of ancient and modern dance tunes. When I first read Mr. Boehme's book I almost thought of giving up the compilation of the present volume, for the German author says that he has been for over twenty years collecting his material on the dance in Germany ; I thought that, at the same rate, even if I reached the age of Methuselah, I could not finish my description of the dances of all nations and of all ages ! Still, I found (although the present volume has entailed considerable labour, and though I am fully aware of its incompleteness and of my many shortcomings) that a general knowledge of dancing simplifies the task, for history repeats itself over and over again.

The dance, like the love story, like the poem, like the folk-song, and like the legend, changes according to time and period in form, though the substance is often the same ; it may be compared to a musical theme played in different keys and in different ways. In Germany, as elsewhere, this was the case.

The sons of ancient Germania were essentially warriors, and their early dances, described by Tacitus and Olaus Magnus, were warlike evolutions with sword and spear We read how

youths, guiltless of clothing, moved between the sharp edges of dirks and lances with wonderful agility. No doubt the pastime had the twofold purpose of developing muscular strength and of furthering dexterity, as well as of commemorating victory or other joyful events. We know that in such early times, when a man's life and a man's sustenance mainly depended on the skill with which he wielded his weapons, these very weapons must have been sacred to him, and the sword dance was probably in its origin a religious rite. I am strengthened in my opinion by learning that among the old inhabitants of Germania the words sacrifice and dance were synonymous. Grimm relates that in honour of the god Zio war hymns were sung, and war dances performed, and that the solemn sword dance, so widespread as a custom, may be traced back to this pagan ritual. Olaus Magnus writes that the weapon dances were noisy, performed with shield and spear to the accompaniment of the flute, and alternating in slow and quick movements. He also mentions a dance of bows and hoops. The slackened bow was held in the hand, while the dancers moved in a circle, chanting hymns accompanied by flutes and cymbals. A geometric figure called the rose (a hexagon), made with spear or sword, was the *finale* of the dance. They jumped through hoops, had bells on their ankles, and the leader of the dance was called king. We now associate the sword dance mostly with the Highlands of Scotland, and in the chapter on Scottish dances it has been further described.

In Germania the ancient dances were sacrificial rites; during their performance priests and priestesses prayed and prophesied, and thus became the leaders of the sacred chorus. The singing was generally assigned to the women.

The New Year was a great occasion for pageants and dancing processions, especially in honour of the goddess Hertha (the Earth), and youths and maidens with dance and song were wont to go and gather the mistletoe, just as in the Celtic cult of Britanny, where young people ran about crying, 'Au Gui l'an neuf,' and, so to say, 'danced the New Year in.'



BALL GIVEN BY ALBRECHT IV GRAND DUKE OF BAVARIA

In Germany the harvest festivals called for the dance. A patch of cornfield was left uncut, and round it the husbandmen would carol, chanting 'Wode-wode.'

More than elsewhere, funeral dances were prevalent in Germania, either in connection with the song of lament, and as an exorcism of the evil spirits, or as a natural accompaniment and sequel to the feasts held at funerals, even in Christian times. The incantation dance was forbidden by the Church in the ninth century, but at first these ceremonies were quite reverent and were merely symbolic. In 1271, in Appenzell, the procession which accompanied the Abbot Berthold of St. Gall to his last resting-place danced the whole way home. I have also read that among the ancient customs of the Jews of Germany there was an obligation for maidens returning from a funeral to dance as they journeyed back.

Germany is a land rich in folklore, in fairy tales and legends, and in many of these the dance is prominent. The ancient Teuton believed that all Nature was divine music and dance. As we wander to-day through the dark woods of Thuringia or Suabia, can we not imagine the elfs' and nixies' gambols round the ancestral oak-trees; or, as we sail in a boat over the green waves of the Baltic, do we not seem to hear the dancing mermaids singing as they bound on the rocky shore?

The German Saga also admits that giants dance, but they are never merry, and foot it invariably to a sad, weird melody. The oldest poetry of every nation is in connection with the dance. There is no dance without its song, and the dance-song preceded the epic. In Germany a song accompanied by a dance was called 'Leiche.'

The introduction of Christianity into Germany, which was chiefly due to apostles and missionaries from British shores, modified the dance, together with other pagan rites; but, wisely advised, the teachers of the new faith did not suddenly exact the total repression of ancient customs. Thus, the same dances were performed at Christian festivals as at pagan

ones; often the original dance-hymns were sung, the invocation to the deity being merely changed to a Christian form.

There exists a Latin poem, written in 1000 A.D., which describes an old German dance, and Dr. Holland thinks that this very dance is still in use on the banks of the Tegern See at the feast day of St. Bartholomew, and it is called the 'Schuhplatteln.' From the Minnesingers we can learn much about the old dances of Germany. As they carolled their lively tunes and welcomed spring in glad accents, they merrily trod the May-measures; noblemen and boors, craftsmen and soldiers, would join the songsters under the lime-tree found in the centre of every village, and they would bound in glee, take a maid by the hand, and go with her through the mazy dance —a dance as old as the country, as old as love, and one which will remain popular as long as youths woo maidens. Hans Sachs has left us wonderful accounts of some of these dances, among others, of the *Schönpart*, a carnival dance of Nürnberg. He begins:

Es fünfzehnhundert Jahr
Und neun und dreissig war
Am Montag vor Fastnacht
Als ich gen Nürnberg bracht
Etlich Waar zu verkaufen.

This *Schönpart* was an annual dance special to the old Gothic city, and Hans Sachs describes it so minutely that we could reproduce it to-day without the slightest difficulty.

From the thirteenth century to the sixteenth, epic poems mention a whole wealth of dances. German society was rigorously divided into distinct classes. There was the nobility, the gentry, the peasantry, and the handicraftsmen, and each had their own dances as well as their own costumes prescribed by law. There were two distinct kinds of dances; just as in France there were the *Carole* and *Espringale* (*danse basse* and *danse haute*), so in Germany there was the circular dance and the measure. The first was jumpy, performed in street or field,



THE PRODIGAL SON

After Karel van Mander I

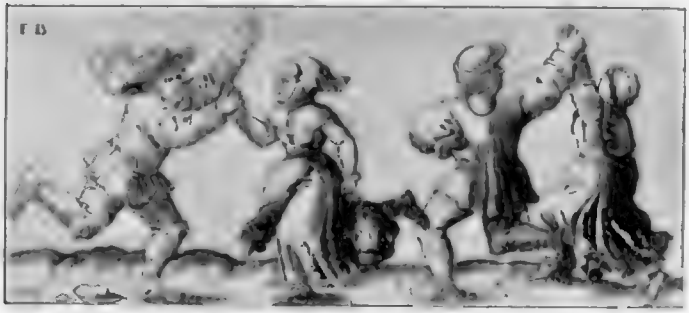
and a summer sport; the second was gliding, performed in halls, and a winter amusement. Whichever the dance, a song always accompanied it, and the leader of the song was also the leader of the dance—i.e. the 'Vortänzer,' a much-coveted honour. The fortunate one danced with a filled glass in his hand, and, after he had sung his hymn he emptied the glass, often requesting his fair partner to assist him in this pleasant task.

Dancing manners in those times differed much from ours; for instance, when a nobleman wished to invite a high-born damsel to tread a measure with him, he bounded towards the seat where she was resting, or rushed along the polished floor with a gliding step, as if he were skating towards her, thus expressing his keen desire to be the first to ask the favour. This is surely a great contrast to the languid way in which the dancer of our modern ball-room invites his partner with a victimised air. Another curious custom was that after the conclusion of the dance in Germany the lady conducted her partner to a seat and invited another man. In mediæval Germany the art of flirtation was not unknown; but at balls it took a different form from those to which we are accustomed; thus, to tread on the train of a lady's dress was considered a great *privilege*, and if the knight who availed himself of it was handsome and brave, the blonde lady would smile and affect airs and graces. Women were led to the dance by the hand, often by the sleeve, and sometimes the partners went through their evolutions by merely crossing the two forefingers; this is plainly shown in the accompanying illustration.

The peasants danced under the village Linden, in the field, and especially in the street, and theirs were generally the circular jumping forms. It cannot be denied that the dancing manners of those days were coarse and licentious, but so was the language and the life generally. Writings condemning the pastime of the dance as sinful and harmful abounded then in Germany.

In the tenth century we find that dancing concluded the

festivals of tournaments. Youths and maidens donned their finest attire ; the first dance of the evening was held in honour of the Duke, who led out the Emperor's daughter, and each nobleman then footed it with a lady. These dances of knighthood may be looked upon as the direct outcome of the sword dances. The Torch dance is the next in importance. Often the tapers carried by the noblemen were many-coloured. This was specially usual at weddings. A royal dance of torches was revived and held at Berlin in 1821. Wax torches were used, and the Prince and Princess walked round the room, followed by councillors and ministers, marching according to rank. The



Sixteenth-century Peasants' Dance in Germany
(*From an Engraving by F. Brunn*)

Princess bowed before the King and invited him to dance ; and then she danced with all the princes, while the bridegroom did likewise with the princesses. H. von Freiberg tells us of a strange custom—namely, that formerly before a wedding the betrothed and their friends would have a dance and whirl about till the bishop arrived in full canonicals, then they all formed a ring, in the midst of which the bride was brought by her father, the bridegroom taking up his position near her, and thus the Bishop would marry them. At the Church of the Incoronata at Naples there is a picture representing such a scene. Many are the strange customs of mediæval Germany. The art of

dislocating oneself was much valued — at least, if we are to judge by the engraving of Van Meckenen, called a ring dance. Here evidently a fair Jungfrau offers a ring which she holds in her hand as a reward to the Junker who can make the greatest



The Ring Dance in Germany, fifteenth century
(*From an Engraving by Israhel van Meckenen*)

contortions, and even the piper seems to grimace and seek the favour of the damsel.

Every guild in Germany had its dances. Such is the *Schäfflertanz* of Munich, performed by coopers, and probably originating in the bow and hoop dance already spoken of. It takes place every seven years and always during the first year

of a reign. Every trade had its special dance. The tailors had theirs at Whitsuntide.

> Und als sie nun getrunken hatten
> Begehrten sie einen Tanz;
> Da tanzten alle neunzig
> Schneider neunmal neunzig
> Auf einem Ziegenschwanz.

The carpenters danced on Ash Wednesday in Nürnberg; first these dances took place in the street, then in the town hall, afterwards every small town had its special dance-house, and great luxury was displayed on these occasions. Beautiful figures of Moorish dancers were discovered by Schwanthaler in the dancing-room of the old Town Hall of Munich, and Herkomer has the casts of these statues. With the dance in Germany is also connected superstition. In Würtemberg it is considered a good omen if, during the wedding dance, no mistake is made and no interruption occurs; but if anyone stumbles or drops anything it is considered a sign of bad luck for the wedded couple.

Dancing as a feudal obligation was usual in Germany. At Langenberg the custom still survives. On Whit Tuesday every peasant must lead out a partner, and in good or fair weather, *nolens volens*, *must* dance under penalty of a fine; and the dance must continue as long as the barrel which is brought under the village lime-tree for the occasion contains one single glass of beer. It is said that the Emperor Heinrich der Vogler, passing through Langenberg on a Whit Tuesday, asked for a relay of horses, but the Langenbergers were too busy with their gambols round the lime-tree to heed their sovereign's wants. They refused to interrupt their sport, and, to punish them, the Emperor ordered that every year, under all circumstances, the *Frohntanz* was to be performed at Langenberg.

The *Siebensprung*, another dance still in use, must be a difficult performance. The music is in $\frac{2}{4}$ time, and at given intervals the male dancer has to make seven different move-

ments, two with his feet, two with his knees, two with the elbows and one with his head, consisting in touching the floor with his forehead; during the whole process the female dancer pirouettes around him, and quaint verses are sung.



Peasants dancing in Germany
(*From an Engraving after Cornélis Bega, about* 1645)

At weddings it is still, in some parts of Germany (Schlesien and Brandenburg), customary to perform the Death dance. The name sounds gruesome, but it is a merry sport, in which kissing is not forgotten. A dancer assumes the part of a

corpse by lying down in the middle of the room; all the others in pairs group around him; they shout and sing merry tunes and dance noisily. Suddenly the music ceases; the whole company begin a song supposed to awaken the dead one. If he be a man, all the girls one after another go and kiss him, and he (the corpse) must not move under penalty of a fine; if it be a woman, then the men go through the same performance. When all have done, the music begins again, and as the apparently dead one arises, a joyful wild dance, accompanied by the song, is performed.

TODTENTANZ

(*From Boehme, by permission of Messrs Breitkopf & Haertel, Leipzig*)



But the most important dance of Germany is the waltz. In spite of French or Italian claims, so well ridiculed by



THE WALTZ

Washington Irving, the waltz is a German dance. In its best form the waltz is an enthralling and a poetic dance. Byron may use his strongest invectives against it, or jeer at it :

> Endearing waltz ! to thy more melting tune
> Bow Irish jig and ancient rigadoon.
> Scotch reels avaunt ! and country-dance forego
> Your future claims to each fantastic toe !
> Waltz, waltz alone both legs and arms demands,
> Liberal of feet and lavish of her hands.

It will ever remain as an ideal dance if well performed with all due grace and inspired by the emotion caused by the music.

This duet dance was originally called Dreher (turner), and the very word waltz means turning. The first waltz tune appeared in 1670 in a popular song, 'O du lieber Augustin ;' but it was 1812 before it made its appearance in England, where it met with strong opposition. The caricatures of the period truly picture the feeling against the 'insidious waltz'—'this imp of Germany brought up in France ;' and Byron justly laughed at the early English waltz compositions, for they were very poor. Weber did much for the waltz ; in his 'Invitation à la Valse' we have a perfect model, for the dance was never intended to be a fast one. About forty years ago Weber's composition was the favourite waltz tune played in the ball-rooms of France and Belgium. Schubert has given us beautiful waltzes, and in his airs he expresses faithfully the true character of the dance, which is made of keen enjoyment, tinged here and there with melancholy. But Vienna's son, Strauss, is the real composer of waltzes ; his airs are so 'dancing' that few can resist the spell, and he varies his melody wonderfully to the rhythm.

Some writers argue that the waltz came from the *Allemande*, but a superficial inquiry will prove that this is erroneous. The *Allemande* was a mediæval German dance, introduced about 1600 in France, Spain, and England. Here it was called *Almain*; in France it went under the name of *Allemande française.* It

was performed by several couples, and the great art in this dance did not consist in figures and in steps, but rather in arm movements. It was a favourite of Louis XIV. and of Napoleon. We find also that it was danced in Switzerland, a country which seems to have few national dance forms, though I am surprised it should not have many curious country-dances special to its mountainous district, but we must remember that it once formed part of Germany.



Allemande
(*From an Engraving after C. Brandoin*, 1772)

Besides Boehme's work on the German dance, it is fair to acknowledge the accounts given by Voss and by Czerwinski

HOLLAND

Holland adopted many foreign dance measures, especially those which remained from the Spanish dominion. The *Plugge-dansen* is a kind of *fandango*. The egg dance, of which an illustration is here given, is very curious. The same form was usual in England, and there are many points of resemblance



STATE BALL AT AMSTERDAM, 1768

(From an Engraving by R. Vinkeles)

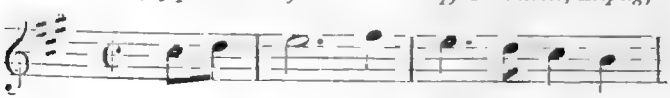
between English and Dutch dances. The Dutch being a race of sailors, have a *matelot* dance not unlike our hornpipe; it is, however, performed with clogs, and instead of the sailor's arms



The Egg Dance in Holland
(*From an Engraving after Theodor de Bry*, 1611)

being crossed over his chest, the Dutchman crosses them on his back. In the opera *Czar und Zimmermann* a good musical example is given of the *matelot*.

BALLET DES MATELOTS. DER SCHIFFERKNECHTE DANTZ
(*From Boehme, by permission of Messrs Breitkopf & Haertel, Leipzig*)





The painters and engravers of Holland have left us numerous dance representations, either of the popular kind usual at the Kermesses, or of the great State dances. Biblical dances also were a favourite subject. Art was highly developed in Holland, and was not only the result of genius; for it owed much to the wealth of the land in which it found a shelter while Italy was busy with her internal quarrels, while Germany tried to profit by these quarrels, while France spent much of her energy on wars, civil and foreign, while Spain sent out her sons to the gold mines, and while Britain was busy with the establishment of her commercial position. We, therefore, have many pictures of European dance forms due to Dutch artists.

BELGIUM

In Belgium we find mostly *rondes*, connected with festivals, and old dance-songs. In the Walloon country the *Cramignon* is a characteristic form; it is a kind of farandole—e.g. a sort of chain dance accompanied by a song, idyllic or satirical.

CHANSON D'CRAMIGNON

Allegretto

1er COUPLET





SWORD DANCE OF VIKINGS ROUND THE SACRED HORNS, CIRCA 900


lés et des so - lés tot ronds po fé dan - sé Pi - ron.
2e COUPLET
Pi-ron n' vout nin dan - sé s'i n'a des noû - vès
A
B
châss', des châs - sèttes tottès vett' et des so-
lés tot ronds po fé dan - sé Pi - ron.

SCANDINAVIA

Of the Scandinavian dances those of Faroë are the most important. Their dance-songs are so long that one often fills the evening. At weddings, Danish songs are given, and, like the Walloon ones, they are sometimes ironical. The dancing is often accompanied by the harp, but a song is indispensable, and the movements are not jumpy and rough, but measured and in a circular figure. In the Sagas we read much about the old *Reihen*, and especially about the weapon dances. There is an interesting account of a Swedish religious dance in honour of Thor, during which the drinking horns, sacred to the god, were brought in. The Vikings danced thus at marriage feasts, and it is related that the music was so enlivening that the Saga was recited with such wonderful accents that warriors and guests were compelled to rise from their seats and dance in a processional step, forming a hexagon with their swords. Mr. Percy Macquoid has drawn here a picture which strikingly represents this quaint ceremony. In heroic dances the step would be a leap. In Faroë the national music is fine, and

unlike the music of any other land. They have over two hundred ancient ballads mostly relating to the dance. The dance itself is prehistoric, and is found in the old customs of Sweden, Norway, and Denmark.

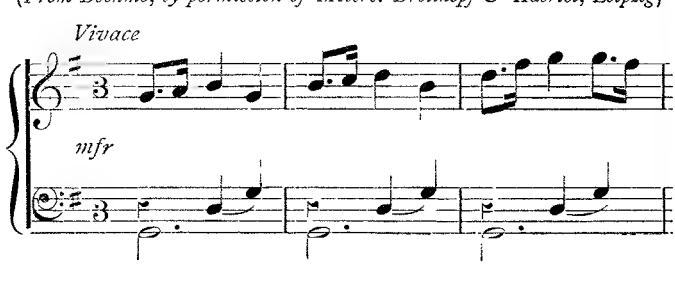
The dances of Sweden are lively, and in some measure they are a dramatic representation of love and courtship. They are called *Polska*, and, though this may sound Polish, are essentially national. Over four hundred varieties exist. The sword dances were taught at the same time as fencing, and the ecclesiastics took part in them and also led the wedding dance. Up to this century ministers in their gowns would share the innocent amusements of their congregation.

NORWEGIAN DANCE



SCHWEDISCHER BAUERNTANZ AUS UPLAND

(*From Boehme, by permission of Messrs. Breitkopf & Haertel, Leipzig*)





NORWEGIAN DANCE
(After A. Tidemand)



In the Sturlungasaga, a strophe of an ancient Northern dance-song is preserved, and the old Siegfriedslied in Faroë was sung to a dance. Iceland has a national dance called the *Vikivaka*; it is similar to the Faroë amusements, but, properly speaking, the *Vikivaka* is a song accompanied by any dance movements. The *Hringbrot* is another Icelandic dance, somewhat similar to the polonaise. Ten or more men form a chain, and the first go under the arched arms of the last, and the rest follow without loosening hands.

The Lapps dance to heroic songs, ending their performance with a vehement lamentation at not being able to follow in the glorious footsteps of their ancestors. They still perform the ancient Scandinavian sword dance.

CHAPTER X

THE DANCE IN PORTUGAL, SPAIN, AND ITALY

PORTUGUESE DANCES

In the account of the dances of Spain, we will see that geographical divisions mark divisions in the character of the inhabitants and of their music and dances. Portugal is closely allied to Spain by its geographical position and by the common origin of the race, so we may expect in some respects to find the two countries resembling each other in their dances also. But as North Spain differs from South Spain, so does Portugal differ from her sister country; and, moreover, Portugal is not one province, but a group of provinces, each one of which has to some extent dances and dance-music peculiar to itself. The position of the dance in Portugal represents the position of the race, neither northern nor southern, but a mixture of both, with a decided flavour of the east, received from the Arabs.

In this south-western corner of Europe we find many remains of old Moorish civilisation, and the traces of Saracen culture are greater in Portugal than even in Southern Spain; it is stated that the Saracens taught the Portuguese Cymons 'all the sweet civilities of life,' and among these the dance was prominent. These dances are said not to be specially graceful; they are slow in movement, and similar to Oriental dances, reminding us of the East because they consist mostly of movements of the body and arms, and because they have no steps worth mentioning. They are simple and expressive, and are often performed as a rest after labour; the

threshing-floor is generally the scene of the dance, and its season is mostly that of harvest or vintage. Simple, too, are the accompanying songs : each province has its own, and they are very original, sweet and varied, and unhappily little known to us. Many of them are extempore, and in the form of an irregular quatrain. Here is one of them—and though we cannot say much for the morality of the maid, at least she bestows on her best beloved a very original distinction. 'I have five lovers, three for the morning, two for the afternoon ; to all these I tell falsehoods, to you alone I speak the truth.' But they are not all so flattering ; witness the following : – 'When the cork tree shall yield berries, and the bay tree cork, then I may fall in love with you—if I can take the trouble,'— in great contrast to the light tone of which the following sounds pathetic : 'For love of thee I have lost Heaven ; for love of thee I have lost myself. Now I find myself alone without God, without love, without thee.'

The dances are generally innocent and decorous ; they resemble quadrilles, with hops and skips, but without much spirit, and the faces of the performers maintain a solemn gravity. Castanets are seldom used in Portugal, and the dance is accompanied by the guitar, or by songs, the theme of which is usually the bright-eyed maids or the brave sons of Lusitania. The dress is very picturesque ; the women wear huge hats ornamented with flowers and ribbons, a bright scarf round their shoulders, large ear-rings, and many gold chains on their necks. They generally arrive on horseback or on a mule, and wear in their hats a picture of the saint in whose honour the merry-making is held. There are many of these festivals, called Romarias, and on these occasions, according to a traveller, there is 'a small amount of praying, a good deal of eating and drinking, and a vast amount of dancing and singing.' The name of the principal dance of a Romaria is the *Fofa*.

Portugal is famous for its *Ballets Ambulatoires*, which are religious processions with dances, in imitation of the Tuscan pomp, and such as we meet with all over Italy. The canoni-

sation of Cardinal C. Borromée was celebrated by a ballet of this kind. There is also a well-known dance called the *Fado.*

Portugal really consists of two distinct parts—the north is Celtic in character, the south is Arab.

The dancing customs go back to the greatest antiquity, and we cannot trace them far enough in their course, but we know that the race of the peninsula called Euskariana, which Humboldt calls Iberian and which preceded the Aryans in Europe, has left dancing rites in Portugal such as the *Ululate* to which Silio Italico refers : the *Renchilido* or the *Apupo* of the Mintro.

The Arab dance *Lambra* is also called *Mourisca*, and the Portuguese poets often write about the *Mourisca.*

The Portuguese dances are influenced by the position of the country ; they are often immodest, originating from the Arabs or from African possessions, like the *Fados* and the *Batuques*, received from the Brazilian colonies.

In the Cancionéiro Portuguez da Vaticana documents about the dances usual in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries abound, and the songs which accompanied these dances gave their name to a certain kind of lyrics—i.e. *baylata* or *balada.*

In the ceremonies usual on conferring knighthood fights with the Moors were simulated, and thus the kind called *Mourisca* (the English Morris dance) was originated. In the Azores it is still preserved under a dramatic form called *Mouriscadas.* Fernão Lopes, describing the character of King Pedro I., says of him that he was a great votary of the dance. Dances such as the *Baixa*, *Chacota*, *Mourisca*, and *Villão* were usual at all Court weddings in the sixteenth century. The *Baixa* is a special kind which includes other dances. Religious festivals gave most opportunity for the dance.

The Spanish dominion in Portugal, 1580–1640, propagated in Portugal a great number of dances which still are common. Dancing was a monomania with Philip III. of Spain and Portugal, and his prime minister, who also became a cardinal, distinguished himself as the best dancer of his time. The

whole aristocracy of Spain and Portugal became affected by the dancing-rage, which was ridiculed by Manuel de Mello. This monomania caused a separation between popular and Court dances. Foreign dances were introduced and their names were slightly altered; the *Tourdion*, for example, was called *Esturdia*, &c. *Xacaras* were also danced, and were what Cervantes called *Danzas habladas*. The *Sarabanda* was introduced from Spain in 1586, and the *Alleman* from Germany: Lope de Vega mentions it in his *Dorotea*.

The dances of the eighteenth century were very free. The *Fofa*, a kind of national dance performed by couples with guitar accompaniment or other instruments, was of a specially indecorous character, which must be attributed to African or Brazilian influences.

In the Azores, at the feast of the Espirito Santo dances are held (*Charambas* and *Sapateados*); in spite of restrictions these customs have not wholly died out. A person represented the Imperador, with two kings, four pages, all the nobility and the populace, and thus entered the church. Crowns were put on the altar and a priest crowned the three monarchs. The Imperador was accompanied by two girls who danced a *Prestilo*, and who afterwards received a dowry from him. The Imperador turned to the church and offered his crown on another altar, where another priest handed it back to him. Then he sat on a throne and before him were danced *Folias* and *Bailes* by nobles and plebeians.

The feast of St. John in the old town of Pedrogam-Penhesio was celebrated by a Mouriscan dance like the English Morris, but concluding with genuflexions to the saint as a farewell, and shouting 'Viva, meu compadre S. João Baptista!'

To jump through fires is a custom at the St. John festivals nearly everywhere; in Portugal and in the Azores it is kept up and called Fogueiras de S. João. We have also seen that at the times of great epidemics and sorrow, dances have been in favour in most countries, partly to afford people a

relief to their thoughts, and as a natural vent of feeling. In Portugal this was also the case ; after the plague in Lisbon in 1570, there were great dancing processions. During the festival of the Assumpção four Autos with interludes of dancing took place. One of these was the *Dansa de Donzellas*, performed by eight little girls under ten, beautifully dressed, parading through the streets to the sound of lute, and occasionally stopping their procession in order to perform a little play in allusion to conversion and baptism. The *Dansas dos Mariyos, dos Espingardeiros, dos Pratos*, formed part of the other *autos*, and may, in fact, be regarded as the foundation of the popular Portuguese drama.

Unhappily to-day Portugal, principally in the towns, is fast losing its original character ; its foreign colonisation, its position on the sea-coast causing great mingling with aliens, above all Gallomania, have altered its picturesque colouring. In contrast with the Spaniard, who still clings to his old traditions and customs, the Portuguese is at present more Parisian than Iberian. We can but think regretfully of olden times, of times when, according to the Portuguese 'Froissart,' Fernão Lopes, the King Dom Pedro I., mad with sorrow at the loss of his beloved wife Inez de Castro, sleepless with gnawing pains of his bereavement, would in the middle of the night order a troop of soldiers to form a hedge from his palace and hold lighted torches, so that in the moonlight he might dance between them, and thus give bodily expression to the vehemence of his grief.

BASQUE DANCES

The Basques have a great number of dances. In their country holidays are made festive with dance, song, and 'pelota' (ball). The dances, which are Salic and of a strange character, are so numerous that we can only describe two or three. One of the most famous is the *Pordon Dantza* or Lance dance, which varies from a slow and languishing time

to a measure of great vivacity. It is generally performed on the feast of St. John, and at Tolosa it is used to commemorate the famous battle of Beotibar.

PORDON DANTZA





But it would be impossible to make a catalogue of all the Basque dances ; they would fill a book, and indeed have filled one, a book written by Don Ignacio de Yzueta, and accessible to all who are familiar with the Basque language.

The Basques of to-day are conservative to a high degree, clinging fast to old observances and old superstitions. It is certain that in the province of Guipuzcoa dancing occupies, and has occupied for many years, a considerable part of both public and private life, and the municipal sessions are even now opened with a dance. The *Edate, edo carrica dantza*, is held on feast days or other solemn occasions, when the inhabitants dance under the paternal eye of the local authorities, the dignitaries of the neighbourhood appearing with their ladies. Only the Alcalde has power to order the performance of this dance. Mr. Stephens describes such a scene in the little village of Yuretta on a Sunday afternoon. The signal for the sport is given by the Alcalde, who sticks a silver-headed javelin of very antique workmanship into the ground at one corner of the Plaza in front of the church. This brings out a drummer and another man with pipe and tabor, who together begin a slow but strongly accentuated martial measure. Mr. Stephens describes the Alcalde whom he saw as 'a very imposing personage, tall, thin, and sedate, adorned with a comical brown night-cap turned up with brown velvet, a loose brown spencer which would have held another Alcalde, brown knee-breeches and

black worsted stockings. The Alguazil who supported him by sitting beside him for three hours was, on the contrary, a fat, short, talkative authority. I never saw such a contrast except in the sketches of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza.' The dance was a warlike one, and it was at first demonstrated by a file of young women, 'the file-leader acting as fugle-woman,' and leading the others with a balancing and saltatory movement in the manner of the Spartan girls exercising in the public squares and daring their lovers to the fight. A crowd of men watched these evolutions 'till one after another broke into the line, seizing an opponent with each hand till all were fairly engaged.' The combined, yet rival, forces now made another solemn perambulation to the same measure. Then followed another signal from the Alcalde, and the movement at once became brisk and whirling, the manœuvres being executed with grace and energy. When the Alcalde sees the vortex becoming too great, he gives another signal to the piper (though sometimes in his admiration he forgets to do so) and in an instant all is subdued, and the figure is the same as at first, with the addition of a file of male gladiators preceded by their own fugle-man. It will be noticed that women play a very important part in the above dance, and this typifies their position throughout the Basque provinces. They may almost be called Amazons, for though they do not actually carry arms, they know how to use them, and have been known to drive ammunition and provision carts under a cannonade with perfect equanimity.

The *Mutchico*, or *Saut Basque*, of the French Basque provinces, is held during winter nights in large kitchens or on threshing-floors. While the women are engaged in spinning the thread and wool, any jovial old man suddenly gives a loud 'Houp,' claps his hands and proceeds to sing the national air. Then two sticks are placed on the ground in the form of a cross, and the dancer—one of the young men—pirouettes in one or other of the angles of the cross, keeping up with the ever-increasing speed of the music. When the singer stops his

song the dancer picks up both sticks together and concludes his dance amidst loud applause. The young man who wishes to excel in this dance must be careful to perform his steps well and gracefully, and he must dance as long as the song lasts: the women watch curiously, and for the most part without comment, but the old men are most severe critics—probably recalling the performances of their own youth. In this dance there is nothing vulgar; it is very picturesque, and the air is graceful and lively.

Basque dances may be called the earliest survivals of the art in Europe, and one of the most ancient of them is the *Zorzico*, which, from its public nature, somewhat resembles the *Edate* already mentioned. It is a complicated dance, very characteristic, with a curious five-time rhythm; it is also called *Auresca*, from the name given to the leading dancer, or sometimes St. Sebastian, from the town where it is most frequently performed. It is generally danced in the open fields or public squares. On feast days the ceremonies are as follows. First of all, the municipality goes in a body to the parish church of St. Sebastian to hear mass. Then follows the celebrated *Juego de Pelota*, the old game of tennis, in which the Basques are so proficient that one of the kings of England sent for a Basque player to teach the game. The next part of the entertainment is the *Zorzico*. The Alcalde regulates this dance, sitting on a wooden bench with the other village grandees. The dance is opened by the young bachelors, then come the girls, then the married men, and lastly the married women, if they wish or are allowed to dance. The performance lasts for hours. The young men hold each other by the hand in a circle round the bench; then the leader leaves his companions, throws his cap on the ground, and bows to the authorities, pirouetting and prancing about. The Alcalde gravely returns the bow, and the onlookers clap enthusiastically, after which the dancer returns to the circle. Then the young men form in line, there ensues a long walk through the square, and the leader once more dances alone, taking rest occasionally: if he wishes to confer honour on a

person, he does so by means of a variety of steps and postures performed just in front of the distinguished personage.

Suddenly the drums beat, two young men leave the chain, and go and invite a girl who has been chosen specially for them by the Alcalde, who holds a paper containing a list so that no one may be disappointed. The women of Guipuzcoa never seem to rebel at this arrangement, and the elected girl meekly follows the two envoys, who caper about with her twice round the plaza, while the Coryphæus continues his evolutions by himself. Then the maiden is presented to him, and he salutes her by throwing his cap at her feet, as he had previously saluted the Alcalde. He dances before her frantically, she maintaining a solemn countenance all the time : he, too, then becomes earnest, and does not make a single gesticulation, so that, in this respect, the dance somewhat resembles an English hornpipe, while in the gravity of the figures, the simplicity of the rhythm and the solemnity of the dancer's demeanour, it partakes of the characteristics of the French minuet. After this, the girl takes her place in the chain to the left of her partner and everyone faces round. It is then the turn of the last of the file, called Atzescu, to lead. When all the young people are paired, the orchestra strikes up a livelier tune, and the whole square is suddenly invaded by the spectators, who all take part in the dance, down to the very children : the figure is now similar to the Jota of Aragon. The dancers stand opposite to one another, and snap their fingers instead of castanets, while they balance rhythmically. The last figure is called 'Arin, arin ! (quicker, quicker), a rapid whirl like a galop, but never at all confused, however fast the time may be. The *Zorzico*, sometimes called *Torcico*, lasts about twenty minutes. A man keeps order during the performance, with a little stick or whip with which he beats away troublesome dogs or too inquisitive lads. Authority is represented by a javelin, iron wand, or even gold-headed stick stuck in the ground before the bench. Even if this latter is empty, order is well maintained before this symbol of municipality. As soon as the first bell of the Angelus is

heard, however lively the gathering may be, the dignitaries lift their hats, the peasants raise their caps, the dance stops, and a prayer is said.

On great feast days the *Zorzico* is held again in the evening after dinner, when a large fire is lighted in the centre of the square to throw light on the dancers. It is the duty of the Alguazil to throw dry wood on this and keep it burning brightly. Then, too, a military band tries to replace the primitive orchestra, but the 'tamborileros' vie with the players, and the dancers only listen to their beloved national music. A Basque orchestra consists of but two instruments—the fife and drum. The same musician performs on both at one and the same time, holding the fife with his left hand and with his right beating the drum which he carries suspended round his neck. This singular harmony is rather barbarous, but one gets to like it, and the Basques think there is no music equal to it. The performer is called 'tambilero,' and every village has its salaried musician. His skill consists in remembering ancient airs, such as the Cantabrian March, the *Espata Danza*, and the Loyola March.

The *Zorzico*, though of very ancient origin, has been somewhat altered in the course of time. But it still retains its ancient simplicity, and is so decorous that there was a certain vicar of Bilbao who insisted on all his congregation taking part in the dance.

Of other dances we may mention the *Espata Danza*, which was performed by a hundred men in 1660 before Philip IV., in the Corpus procession at St. Sebastian; the *Mizpirotza*, a dance performed by moonlight, and set to music by Haydn; and the *Pantalon*, an ancient dance belonging to St. Pé (Hautes Pyrénées) and probably of Basque origin; as also the *Carrica*, a street dance. The above will give an idea of the number and variety of Basque dances, and the accounts of some of them, such as the *Zorzico* or the *Edate*, show their immense popularity. Indeed Le Pays, writing about the Basque provinces, says that a child of these parts can dance before it can say

'father.' Priests also used to dance : 'J'ai remarqué qu'aux noces c'est toujours le curé qui mène le branle,' says Pierre de Lancre. In 1715 the bishop of Pampeluna gave an order to forbid the clergy to dance by day or night. In 1749 another bishop allowed male dancers and tambourine players to enter the churches on Christmas day, and this permission was extended to the festivals of the patron saints. We know that in many places it was an act of religious worship to dance in the churches.

It is difficult to describe the general character of the Basque dances. One should see them performed by the seashore or at the foot of great mountains, hear the forest echo repeat the refrain of the song, to the accompaniment of the tinkling cattle-bells, or the hollow murmur of the surf as it breaks on the shore.

SPAIN

Take up at random any book of travels in Spain, even the merest guide-book, and you will probably find in it a description of the dances of the Peninsula. To the student of Spanish literature there is a wider field for reference, in the works of Lope de Vega, and especially Cervantes ; and the latter truly weighs the importance of the art in his country when he says, 'There ne'er was born a Spanish woman yet, but she was born to dance.' No doubt the author of 'Don Quixote' was himself a lover of the dance, for he uses charming expressions with regard to it. He says, for instance, of a dear little girl, 'She dances like thought.'

Everyone dances in Spain, and everywhere the dance is seen—in streets or on mountains; in courts or by gutters ; in squares or narrow lanes ; in churches or theatres ; by sunlight, by moonlight, by candlelight. It belongs essentially to the country, like the rocks and orange groves and vineyards. There is little exaggeration in the traveller's assertion that, if at any moment one entered a church or law-court of Spain, playing a fandango, those present would forget their

prayers or business, no matter how grave the meeting, and begin to dance. All those who have been to Spain know how contagious becomes the excitement of the dance. I have even seen a Presbyterian minister sway his body rhythmically to the *Bolero*, quite unaware of his own performance. Spain is the true home of the dance. Here everyone dances naturally, it comes as easily as the very life-breath; there is nothing taught, nothing artificial, nothing that speaks of difficulties overcome to the senses of the spectator. The bodies of the native dancers are as flexible as reeds. They move with the ease of birds; they dance as the sunbeams dance amidst the sweet-scented acacias, as the wave dances on the green plain of the ocean. Cervantes expresses my feeling most truly when he sums up the dances of the Spanish as 'the bounding of the soul, the bursting of laughter, the restlessness of the body, and the quicksilver of the five senses.' There is nothing indecorous in this dance, because it is entirely devoid of affectation, and because there is always present a certain dignity, no matter how brisk the measure. It never tires, but rather it rests spectator and performer alike.

The dance in Spain is an unchanged pastime of antiquity, and in speaking of it I feel constantly inclined to quote Martial and Juvenal. The performances of Cadiz dancing-girls are often described by Roman authors. At that time, as to-day, *Betica*, now Andalusia, was the classic home of the art. In spite of all the invectives hurled against women dancers, we know that in Rome men forgot their cares—consuls, pro-consuls, and wise senators forgot their meals even—when their hearts were held captive by the foreign sirens. Did not Pliny's friend, Claro, leave his olives and his tunny in order to go and applaud the Gaditanian dance? These dances, performed especially to gratify luxurious Rome, were forbidden on the advent of Christianity.

But the dance was a passion too deeply rooted in the Spanish nature: prohibitive measures availed nothing. Even during the terrible Inquisition priests, Friar Marti of Alicante

and others, ventured to write treatises on dancing. They generally pointed out in erudite essays the connection between Spanish dances and those of classic periods, and drew parallels between each of the celebrated ancient forms and those of their own country. There is no doubt that in Spain, even more than in Russia or Italy, we find up to our day survivals of Greek dances modified by Roman manners and customs.

There are in Spain traces of the old Pyrrhic dances of Greece. One of these, representing a battle between Christians and Moors, was one of the festivities at the wedding of Count Ramon Berenguer IV. with Queen Petronella of Aragon.

The Asturians have a very wild dance of this class, performed stick in hand, recalling the *Ghillie Callum*. It is said to be an exact revival of the dance performed by Hannibal at Gracchus's funeral. The change of the figures is accompanied by the shouts of the audience.

The *Danza Prima* of Asturia is traced in Spain back to the time of the Goths, but it is a survival of classic traditions. It was probably preserved in the Asturian mountains, where it took refuge during the domination of the Moors. It is a circular dance. Neither Goth nor Arab was able to obliterate the character of this sport of olden time.

The Catalans introduced into their Pyrrhic dance certain imps, who performed comic evolutions in order to relieve the grave character of the movements. They also revived in the twelfth century some cheironomic dances of Greece, performed by hunchbacks singing burlesque songs, carrying staves, to represent satyrs, vintners, gardeners, fishermen, and the like. These variations are in vogue up to the present day, especially in the town of Tarragona on the feast of Santa Tecla.

Among ancient native dances is that thirteenth-century one of Castile, *Bailes llanos ó tonadillas*, during which light verses were sung to the accompaniment of tambourines and castanets. Other dances were occasioned by pilgrimages, like that to the shrine of Sta Maria del Essar, in which men bent with old age, staff in hand, danced a *Palotéo* to the sound of a burlesque

song, quavered out by themselves. A little farce followed, in which each one of the actors sang his own adventures. This was more or less an Escarraman. The mountaineers, for their part, on the same occasion had a dance of their own. Towards the sixteenth century there was a great revival of dancing in Spain ; musicians and poets themselves taught the movements and postures, and designed the figures. The sister arts were cultivated with passion. No one who was ignorant of music and dancing was considered educated.

And now, what Galician or Asturian, hearing the strains of the *Muñeyra*, or of the *Danza Prima*, will not throw off his fatigue, and rejoice ? while the native of Valladolid or of Salamanca, when he catches the sound of the tambourine or the large castanets of his country, will skip with joy ; and the inhabitant of Murcia, harkening to the twang of the guitar as it preludes the Torras and Parrandas, will be profoundly moved. More enthusiastic than these, the Manchego, hearing the tune of the *Seguidillas*, will alight from his horse and tether it. But most emotional of all is the Andalusian. His excitement—when instruments or voice proclaim the Fandango, the Olé, the Sevillanas, the Vito, and others—knows no bounds. Yet the Aragonese goes further than any, if his protestations in praise of the dance are good evidence ; for he will gravely assure you that the *Jota* is capable of quickening the dead.

It seems impossible to describe these things ; the sound and movement must be heard and seen. One must go to Xeres and see the *Jaleo*, to Malaga for the *Rondeña*, and the gravest and saddest will forget his gravity and sorrow. The spectacle of the dance, like the fiery wine of Spain, will make his heart merry, and the blood to course more quickly through his veins.

Countless are the *provincial* dances of Spain, but there are three which are *national*. They are the *Fandango*, the *Bolero*, and the *Seguidillas* ; and of all the dances in the country the *Fandango* is the most important.

The word *Fandango* means 'go and dance.' The movements have been described by Buretti as a 'regular and harmonious convulsion of all parts of the body.' It is of extreme antiquity, and may be assumed to be the prototype of all Spanish dances. Marini, the modern Ovid, accurately described the *Fandango* as it was danced in his time, and Dr. Yriarte speaks of the 'melodious fandango which charms the soul of natives and of strangers, of wise men and of old men.'



El Fandango
(*From a Print by Jean Victor Adam, about* 1840)

Danced by two people in slow $\frac{6}{8}$ time, accompanied by castanets, the clicking of the wooden instruments, the song, the movement of feet and arms, all work together into a harmonious whole. Everything is life and motion in this dance, beginning tenderly and gently, and gradually reaching the highest pitch of exaltation. Every part of the body is alive. The feet stamp the time accents, in the absence of castanets the fingers and thumbs are snapped. When the first couple are tired, their

place is immediately taken by a second. 'The fury and ardour for the dance,' writes a traveller, 'with which Spaniards are possessed on hearing the *Fandango* played, recall to my mind the impatience of the Italian racehorses standing behind the rope which, being fixed across the street breast high, restrained them, and the velocity and eagerness with which they set off without riders the instant that barrier is removed.'

Possibly the *Fandango* was even known in ancient Rome, for Pliny writes in a letter: 'Come to-night, we will sup together, we will drink excellent wine. The peacocks, the nightingales, the thrushes of Malta, the wild boar in Trojan fashion, nothing will be forgotten, and above all I will procure for you the diversion of the Spanish dance.'

There is a curious little story connected with the *Fandango* and related by the Chevalier Bourgoing, a traveller in 1700. It has given rise to ballads, comedies, and pictures called 'The Trial of the Fandango.'

The Consistory Court of Rome was indignant that in such a very pious country as Spain so godless a dance as the *Fandango* should still be in vogue. The ecclesiastical authorities were going to condemn it when a judge remarked that it was not fair to censure what one did not know. Two celebrated dancers were sent for, accordingly, to perform the Fandango before the Court. They danced to such effect that everyone joined in, and the proposed condemnation of the dance was entirely forgotten.

The *Malagueña* shares with the *Fandango* the rank of the principal dance of Andalusia. It is sometimes called the *Flamenco*, a term which in Spain signifies gay and lively when applied to song or dance. It is said to have originated with the Spanish occupation of Flanders. Spanish soldiers who had been quartered in the Netherlands were styled Flamencos. When they returned to their native land it was usually with a full purse; generous entertainment and jollity followed as a matter of course.

The *Bolero* is shorter than the *Fandango*, and is compara-



EL BOLERO

(From a Print after J. F. Lewis)

tively modern in Spain, where it was introduced from Provence. The name is supposed to come from *volar*, 'to fly,' because a Manchega expert had danced the *Seguidillas* so wonderfully and lightly that he seemed to fly. The *Bolero* is performed to guitar and castanet accompaniment. The woman's part is very lively and diversified, and in no other dance do you see such a great variety of arm movements. In all these Spanish dances the fulness of expression is amazing. Eyes and features emphasise the postures, and every human passion is thereby depicted. It is therefore not astonishing, as we have remarked before, that unconsciously the spectator falls to imitating the performers.

BOLERO





The *Boleras* is different from the *Bolero,* although the time is taken from the latter. It is generally used in the theatres

when it is wished to represent Andalusians or gay and animated people. The *Boleras* is rather a dance-song than a dance proper.

Some authorities assert that the *Bolero* is the outcome of the *Seguidillas*. Be that as it may, it is generally understood that when the *Bolero* or *Fandango* is danced in ballet form by eight people, it is called the *Seguidillas*.

In the *Seguidillas* the voice generally accompanies the dance and the women mark the rhythm with their heels—*taconeo*, a movement which adds a piquant effect. This is a quicker dance than the *Bolero*. A prelude on the guitar allows the pairs to group themselves in two files, with a space of three or four steps between them. On the fourth bar of the dance tune the movements begin simultaneously with song and a castanet accompaniment. On the ninth bar a pause is made, and the guitar plays alone. Then all change places and afterwards go through a solemn walk, dance again, and go back to their places. The third part of the *Seguidillas* is suddenly interrupted on the ninth bar. Tradition requires every performer to remain immovable, as if he were petrified, in the attitude in which the last beat has surprised him. This is the most interesting feature of the dance, and 'Bien parado!' (well stopped) is the exclamation which greets the successful dancer.

I wish I were able to describe the fairy-like charm of this dance, performed with all the suppleness, elegance, and harmony of the Andalusian. The best I can do is to refer the reader to the Venere Callipige of the Naples Museum. The model was a Cadiz dancing-girl.

The dance music of Spain is very quaint. Chorley relates of a blind singer engaged in a dance tune that not only was his feeling for accent in itself excellent and provocative, but it seemed incited and fed by the pungent sound of the strings and the thrum of the hand on the sounding board. 'As an element in Spanish dance music,' he continues, 'the castanet is not to be overlooked, working as it does in magic

combination with those poignant guitar sounds, enabling the dancer to be in part his own orchestra and to excite himself, as did the faun of ancient mythology, by the sound of the pipes into which he breathed as he leaped through the vines. But the castanet is a condiment more complete and more comfortable than the faun's reeds, seeing that motion must shorten breath.'

In the Spanish measures a certain dignity is maintained, however brisk may be the movement. When performed by dancers of a low class these dances may easily become coarse, as all dances which have traces of Oriental tendency will do. 'In themselves the Saraband, the Fandango, and the Bolero are quite as beautiful as the Menuet or Polonaise.' Spanish dance measures are peculiar again in their spasmodic character, their pauses and interruptions of rhythm.

In former times dances in Spain were divided into *Danzas* and *Bailes*. The first were grave, and belonged to the higher classes, the others were popular sports. If we go back still further to the Roman period of the Cadiz dancing-girls, we find their art divided into three parts : *Cheironomia*, or play of hands ; *Halma*, or play of feet ; and *Lactisma*, or jumps.

In the old *Danza* the feet only moved, the rest of the body was quite still and the arms were held in a fixed and determined position, such as 'akimbo.' The *Danzas* were often astronomical representations, imitating in their figures the course of the stars and planets. The music was played on lyres and flutes. Such dances may be said to correspond with the Greek Emmeleia. In contemporary Spain the word *Danza* implies a dance performance at public festivals, and ordinary dances are called *Bailes*.

The Valencians have peculiar sports for the display of strength and agility. One of these is the egg dance. A number of eggs are placed at short regular distances from each other on the ground, and the dancers step round and amongst them, seeming as though every moment they must crush them.

Another, the *Palotéo*, is danced with sticks in each hand ; these are struck together instead of castanets. The strange part of it is that, no matter how wild the movements, and how extraordinary the positions, all the dancers strike their sticks at the same moment in perfect time.

The *Gallega* is often performed in Madrid, but is seen to the best advantage in Galicia. The dancers take up their position back to back, feigning sulkiness ; the music is sad and slow. As the measure gradually quickens, they keep time to it with ever quicker and quicker steps ; and suddenly, as if fired by some electric spark, they dance away wildly clicking their castanets. The Galicians have many other dances, such as the *Muyñeira*, performed to the sound of the bagpipe. The *Sarao* is a Carnival game, dating from the sixteenth century. It is a lengthy dance, resembling the *Cotillon* in so far as it includes a number of figures, and may last a whole evening. It was given after a banquet, generally to amuse a Court. In some of the old examples of the *Sarao*, a king or queen was selected from among the dancers ; this dignitary opened the ball and led the figures. Afterwards a *Bastonero*, literally a staff-bearer, a master of the ceremonies, was appointed to regulate the ball, choose the couples, and so on. Every *Sarao* opened and closed with a minuet.

Among the ancient pageants were the *Tarasca*, and the *Gigantones y los Enanos* (the giants and the dwarfs). The *Tarasca* is described among the ritual dances. The *Gigantones y los Enanos* is a very old pageant of Spain, described in 1609 by Cuevedo, as performed at Barcelona with enormous castanets. Herein was represented the slaying of Goliath by David. The same subject is still employed at the Corpus Christi festival, the allegorical idea of the victory of Christ over sin being suggested. There were representations also of David dancing before the Ark ; but abuses crept into the practice, and these terrible emblematic scenes were forbidden. Still, only some few provinces took the prohibition seriously. Fuertes remarks that as late as 1837 he saw in

Toledo a *Tarasca* in which the travestied woman was called Ana Bolena. He saw the giants and dwarfs dance as well.

The dance constituted an important part in theatrical exhibitions in Spain, even in religious dramas. From the oldest histories we know that it was the favourite pastime of the rude inhabitants of the Peninsula. It was introduced on the stage on the slightest excuse. Even the words already quoted, 'There ne'er was born a Spanish woman yet but she was born to dance,' occurring in the drama 'Gran Sultana,' were illustrated immediately by dancers on the scene. Many theatrical dances were probably accompanied by words, and were what Cervantes called 'recited dances.'

Such was the *Zarabandas*, sometimes spelt *Sarabanda*, a graceful dance traced to the twelfth century, which, according to Padre Mariana, received its name at Seville from a devil in a woman's form. These dances gave great scandal, and in 1621 they were modified. The name *Zarabanda* means noise, and is of Arabic-Moorish origin. It may well have been a survival of the licentious Greek *Cordax*.

Among other theatrical dances of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were the *Chaconne* and the *Escarraman*; these, together with the *Zorongo*, are similar to the Zarabanda, which Cervantes' praise spread throughout Europe. The *Gallarda*, a merry dance with five steps—hence cinque-pas—and the *Pasacalle*, were of the same type.

Returning to the *Zarabanda*, which was originally danced by women only (whereas the *Chaconne* required the usual couple), we find stories gathered round its name. It is said that M. des Yveteaux, dying in Paris at the age of eighty, called for a saraband melody so that his soul might pass more easily away. And Cardinal Richelieu was supposed to have danced this *Zarabanda* with bells on his ankles in order to win the favour of Anne of Austria. As the original dance could not be dropped altogether, it was turned into the *Tonadillas*, and deprived of the objectionable features which worked more harm, as Padre Mariana said, than the plague itself. This dance was trans-

formed, in crossing the Pyrenees, into a noble and solemn measure as danced by the French.

In the Spanish theatre nothing causes more delight than the stage dancing. If the piece is tiresome, the audience languid and bored, it needs only the clang of the castanets to revive it as it were by a flash of lightning. An ungallant author has observed that at the first signal from the castanets the tongues of countless women are silenced—'on n'écoute que le ballet.'

Generally a couple, Majo and Maja, take the floor. Gorgeously attired, they perform a pantomime love-story; and one feels that they dance for the mere pleasure of movement, from sheer necessity of motion, just as kids and lambs must skip and caper. But really their dance is an art, for we see in it order and proportion. The people take to the dance as a rest from their toil, the performance being no fatigue to them, but quite the reverse. A traveller has declared that even the dogs enjoy watching such a scene.

Unfortunately, at the present day, with the introduction into Spain of English beefsteaks, tea, French bonnets and face powder, poetic feeling among Spaniards is gradually dying out. The higher classes have a dislike to national dances. They have been told that these are African, not Spanish in origin, and when they are performed in the theatres, the fashionable part of the audience leave the house. Only the foreigners sit it out, together with the people of the lower orders, in whom it is always difficult to destroy the poetic element.

In Spain, as elsewhere, dances are not expressive of rejoicing only, but are also fitted for grave occasions. From the sixteenth century dances were joined to the *autos*, and Cardinal Ximenes revived at Toledo the ancient custom of dancing in the Church choir during Divine service. This custom is kept up nowadays at Seville, in the dance of *los Seises*, which is described in the chapter on ritual dances. Funerals and wakes also afford opportunities for the dance; the *Jota*,

for instance, is often performed in watching the dead. The *Jota* of Aragon corresponds with the ancient Carole, which in Chaucer's time meant a dance as well as a song. At the feast of La Virgen del Pilar, it is in great favour with the crowd which assembles in Saragossa from outlying parts. The verses in the improvised couplets are not always in true metre, the performers not being very particular. They make up for the loss of a syllable or two in one line by adding it to the next, or they clap their hands, twang the guitar string, or stamp their feet to cover the defect.

The Aragonese in their pride in the dance say that a pretty girl dancing the *Jota* sends an arrow into every heart by each one of her movements. Sometimes the couplets of the *Jota* indulge in a satirical vein; for example: 'Your arms are so beautiful, they look like two sausages, like two sausages hanging in winter from the kitchen ceiling.'

We must not forget the Moorish element in Spain; a dance called after King Alfonso, and belonging to the tenth century is accompanied by a ballad of the same name.

The *Pavan* was a Spanish society dance, called the Great Dance, and it is supposed to have been invented by Ferdinand Cortez; but it is dealt with in the chapter on French dances.

Then there is the *Cachucha*, quite a modern dance, which was first brought into fashion by Fanny Elssler on the stage of the Paris Opéra, and many others which we must pass over in silence, such as the sword dance, the pathetic *Malagueña*, the *Jaleo*, the *Tirano*, the *Vito*, the *Habas Verdes*, and countless others, which take their names either from the place they come from, or from the first line of the accompanying song. The songs are mostly extempore, but the beautiful language and the poetic temperament of the Spanish lend themselves easily to spontaneous poetry. It is not, however, always of the highest order; for instance, the couplet quoted in Grove's 'Dictionary of Music:' 'On Monday I fall in love; on Tuesday I say so; Wednesday I propose; Thursday I am accepted; on Friday I

cause jealousy ; and on Saturday and Sunday I seek a fresh love.' But there is nothing forced, either in words or movements ; plenty of scope exists for individual skill. The steps and figures are executed with great care and precision, and yet with spontaneous grace. The girls find no difficulty in getting partners, the old folk keep time to the music with hand clapping, and all is good-nature and happiness ; nevertheless dignity is never entirely laid aside, be the movement never so quick.

Geographically speaking, the dances of Spain can be grouped in two categories, those of the north, which have many Basque characteristics, and those of the south, derived from Moorish influence. In Andalusia the dances are of a tender character ; in Galicia they have more of a satirical vein. The Andalusians are flowery, somewhat Oriental in their imagery, more graceful than the Galicians, less epigrammatic, and more ideal ; they are, on the whole, less practical, and their character shows itself in all their customs and pastimes. If in their poetry flowers play a prominent part, in their life they are no less important. A cigarette-maker of Seville would rather go without her breakfast than without a flower in her hair ; the Andalusian will call his beloved Rosa or Jasmin. The Galician is more matter-of-fact, and thinks more of fruit than of flowers ; the Galician factory girl certainly would not think of sacrificing her breakfast to provide a carnation for her belt. A Galician author commends them for this utilitarian spirit, and says it is more important that they should have roses in their cheeks than in their hair.

ITALY

Modern civilisation owes a heavy debt to Italy. It has been the home of art and literature, and was the cradle of the Renaissance. To Italy then we turn in the history of dancing, and find that there the dance, after having fallen into disuse in consequence of corruption and of ecclesiastical edicts against it, had *its* renaissance, and blossomed forth once more in the

fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The dawn of this revival appeared in scenic or dramatic dances, of which the first manifestation was in 1489, in a festival given by Bergonza de Botta on the occasion of the wedding of Galeas Sforza, Duke of Milan, to Isabel of Aragon. The ballet represented the story of the Argonauts, and has been fully described by Tristano Calco in his 'De Nuptiis Ducum Mediolanensium.' At the end of the fifteenth and during the sixteenth centuries, ballets increased in popularity, and represented a great variety of subjects, heroic, classical, biblical, or allegorical. So frequent had representations of this sort become that, after a banquet given by the Medici, seventy-two young girls, arranged in groups of twelve, danced to the sound of instruments before the guests. Lucrezia Borgia, too, was an enthusiastic dancer, and often charmed her father with this diversion. When she married the Duke of Ferrara she even mixed with the dancers on the stage several times during the evening.

The Italian dances of the upper classes only attained their perfection when they passed into France, where they were much developed. They were called Danses Basses because they consisted in soft gliding movements, without jumping or skipping, and they were so grave and serious that they were performed to the accompaniment of psalms. Charles IX., King of France, preferred the air of Psalm 129 to all other dance-measures. And indeed the dance seems to have been well suited, both in performers and movements, to its solemn accompaniment; the performers, clad in their mantles and robes, carrying swords, and cap in hand, went through slow, grave evolutions, which in no way detracted from their stateliness, and even the high dignitaries of the Church did not scorn to take part in the measures. Thus we find that the Cardinals of Narbonne and St. Séverin danced at the ball given by Louis XII. at Milan; the Cardinal Hercule d'Este was passionately fond of the amusement, and, as we shall see later on, all the fathers of the famous Council danced at Trent in 1562. The steps in those dances were mostly those of the Pavane,



THE CARDINALS OF NARBONNE AND OF SAINT SÉVERIN DANCING A PAVANNE BEFORE LOUIS XII AT MILAN. 1499

and the figures formed were more like a procession than a dance proper. It was somewhat like the polonaises still to-day performed at some Court balls.

In Italy, poetry and music, and therefore dancing, have attained such a height of artistic development that small room is left for the introduction of popular forms, and there is little or no opportunity for spontaneity or originality. Now-a-days, one frequently hears the Italian working-man singing verses of Dante and Tasso at his labour, and this culture and taste must of necessity be prejudicial to popular productions. But during the seventeenth century dancing was quite an Italian art. Caroso wrote some books about it, in which he gave full directions for performing the dances of his time. They were still more or less a kind of ballet, and had not yet acquired the figures of our dances. The most important points in these sixteenth-century Italian dances are the *Riverenzas* or curtseys, of which three are described—*grave*, *minima*, and *semi-minima*. Then he has a whole article on the art of taking off the cap; and he concludes his instructions by saying that the main requisite in order to dance well, besides the necessary grace and agility, is the possession of a good ear for sound and time.

Many and various are the dances of Italy the names and some of the characteristics of which have come down to us; there are dances to suit all tastes, from the lively *Giga* to the stately *Passamezzo*, which is probably a variety of the *Pavan*, known in England as the 'passing measure Pavin;' from the 'graceful and unique' *Tarantella*, to the *Monferrina*, a country dance belonging to Piedmont, or the *Bergamasca*, a rustic dance of great antiquity, which derives its name from Bergamo, a town in Lombardy, the city of Tasso and Donizetti. The dance takes its characteristics from the inhabitants of Bergamo, who are said to be egotistical and cunning, possessing in a high degree the faults and the virtues of the typical rustic. From this type has arisen the harlequin of modern pantomime —the buffoon of classical periods. But this dance, rustic

though it be, has afforded inspiration to the genius of composers. In Mendelssohn's music to the 'Midsummer Night's Dream' there is a dance called a *Bergomask*, and the late Signor Piatti, a native of Bergamo, arranged this dance (as well as the *Monferrina*) for 'cello and pianoforte Another ancient and very characteristic dance is the *Forlana*, belonging to the Venetian gondoliers. It is written in $\frac{6}{8}$ time, and is performed by two dancers, who keep up a giddy whirl, sometimes giving imitations of rowing or pulling an oar. Then again there is the *Galliard*, the 'merry dance Gagliarda,' in two parts of twelve bars each; in $\frac{3}{2}$, $\frac{3}{8}$, or $\frac{3}{4}$ time, sometimes in $\frac{2}{4}$ or common time. It was also used for singing. It was called by Prætorius 'an invention of the devil,' because it was very immodest; it had also the name of *Romanesca* on account of its Roman origin, while it had yet another name, *Cinque-pas* (*Cinqua-pace*, *Cinque Pass*, or *Sincopas*) from the fact that it had five steps. Under two of these names we find references to it in Shakespeare: 'I did think by the excellent constitution of thy leg that it was formed under the star of a galliard;' and then, in 'Much Ado about Nothing,' we have Beatrice's witty description of matrimony, which I must needs quote *in extenso*:—'Wooing, wedding, and repenting,' says this maiden philosopher, 'is as a Scotch jigge, a measure, and a cinque-pace: the first suit is hot and hasty like a Scotch jigge (and full as fantasticall), the wedding manerly modest (as a measure), full of state and aunchentry; and then comes repentance, and with his bad legs falls into the cinque-pace faster and faster, till he sinkes into his grave.'

'Hot and hasty like a Scotch jigge,' she says, and might have added as an Italian, Spanish, French, or English jigge; for this *Giga*, *Gigue*, or *Jig*, is a very ancient dance, and belongs to many nationalities. It was frequently performed on the stage in the eighteenth century, and the medieval writers often mentioned an instrument called Gigue, supposed by some to be a kind of flute, by others a stringed instrument. The Spanish dance also went by the name of *Loures*.



SALTARELLO AT ROME

Drawn on Engraved after A. C. H. Hand[illegible]

One more ancient dance must be mentioned before we pass to those of more modern times—namely, the *Saltarello*, a dance of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, peculiar to Rome. It is written in $\frac{2}{4}$ time, and is a duet dance of a skipping nature, as its name implies. The woman always holds her apron and performs graceful evolutions in the style of the *Tarantella*, which will be described further on. The couple move in a semicircle, and the dance becomes faster and faster, as it progresses, accompanied by many beautiful motions of the arms. This is a very ancient dance, and has quite a unique character: we find that it is especially performed by gardeners and vintners. Valentin Alkan has published a *Saltarello* for the pianoforte, which may be looked on as a model. Connected with this dance is the *Seccarara* of Naples, which seems to be a dance of a similar nature; it is accompanied by a great play of features, grimaces, and gestures of all kinds.

There is much similarity of character between the ancient and modern Italians: if the modern Italian loves the dance, we remember that a favourite pastime of ancient Rome was the pantomime. This spectacle originated amongst the Greeks. Aristotle says, 'Dancers make use of rhythm alone to express themselves without the aid of harmony; for by means of rhythm, accompanied by appropriate action, they can display character, and sentiment, and subject.' The nature of the Greek pantomime pursued in Rome under the emperors was the same as that of the ballet now performed in the theatre of Italy—that is, it was a drama in dumb show, accompanied by music. It is recorded that Nero, during a dangerous illness, made a vow that, if he recovered, he would dance the story of Turnus in Virgil (Suetonius, 'Nero,' 54).

In Sicily, the 'New Greece,' there were still some of the poets of the land of Homer, whose mission was not only to write verses, but also to set them to music, and to accompany them, or to have them accompanied under their direction, by mimic gesture. In Sicily a man talks in verse, strums on the

guitar, and dances a measure, as easily as a Briton will whistle. Their imaginative and fertile fancy unconsciously reproduces the three spontaneous arts ; the three primitive muses who were the educators of the Hellenes have inspired them too. On Sundays and holidays (and many are the holidays in this fertile land) the musicians, called *Orbi*, assemble and play in the public places, or in front of a house or court ; then the country-people collect and begin their dances to the sound of bagpipes or cymbals. Here we may see them go through the *Ruggera*, a pantomimic dance, peculiar to Messina. This is performed and sung by four people (two men and two women), who move round and round like a clock, making exaggerated gestures. After the first round the musical accompaniment ceases, and the first woman sings a song, either in praise of the tutelary saint, or else merely a love strain. After the second round, the second man follows her example ; after the third round, it is the turn of the second woman ; and after the fourth round, the first man gives a song. It sometimes happens that the musicians for this entertainment are not available, and then the performers dance to the tambourine ; castanets, too, are much in favour, especially during the festivities of Christmas time. But perhaps the most famous dance is the *Siciliana*, the Sicilian dance *par excellence*. It is of an idyllic and tender nature, and sometimes, it must be owned, somewhat wearisome. In Mozart's ' Nozze di Figaro ' there is a charming example of this dance ; it was frequently performed at weddings, on which occasions in Sicily there is much dancing, after the feast. The peasants dance to a flute, or a tambourine with bells ; those who are above the peasants in the social scale have an orchestra of two or three violins, who play the whole afternoon or evening ; sometimes the music is a bagpipe or guitar. The ball is opened by a man who, taking his cap in hand, bows low to the lady ; she then rises noisily and dances with all her might, the couple holding each other by means of a handkerchief. After a time, the man makes another profound bow and sits down, while the woman continues pirouetting by herself ; then

she walks round the room and chooses a partner, and so it goes on, man and woman alternately dancing and choosing. The married couple dance by themselves, until towards the end of



Sicilian
(*From an Engraving after E. H. Pingret*)

the evening, when they all dance together. These sports of the Sicilians are indeed delightful, and besides their innate charm, they have an historical and artistic interest as well,

uniting as they do all the variety of both ancient and modern customs.

We have seen in the account of the *Siciliana* that the invitation to the dance, or the choice of partners, is not left wholly to the male portion of the community, though indeed the women do not seem to be permitted to begin. But in Florence we find a dance called the *Trescona*, where the initiative is taken by the lady, who flicks the handkerchief in the face of the



Tambourine Dance
(*From an Etching by Jacques Callot, about* 1633)

man she elects. But she does not possess a monopoly of the choosing, for he in his turn can invite a lady in the same way. Need we say that this dance is a favourite among the country women, but especially does it find favour among the strong and healthy, who continue the pastime for a very long time, and who usually take off their shoes, and dance with bare feet, in order to perform the better. The *Trescona* is one of the duet dances.

Naples, too, has its special dances, such as the *Punchinello*

and the *Tarantella*, the latter of which is to the Neapolitans what the *Fandango* is to Spaniards. But the *Tarantella* has attained to national fame, it has spread over all south Italy, and is the dance most frequently mentioned by travellers in Italy. It is usually danced by a man and woman but sometimes by two or three women alone, playing tambourines and the large-sized Neapolitan castanets; the time is gradually



Tarantella
(From an Engraving by F. Bartolozzi after W. Locke)

accelerated until the dancers revolve at a high rate of speed That the dance was beautiful and very fascinating may be seen from Madame de Staël's account of it in 'Corinne,' which is so perfect that I cannot do better than quote the passage at length as given by the translators, E. Baldwin and P. Driver:—

Lord Nevil saw Prince Amalfi, an elegant-looking Neapolitan, entreating Corinne to dance the 'Tarantella' with him—a graceful

and unique Neapolitan dance. Her friends joined their entreaties to his, and she consented at once, which astonished Count d'Erfeuil not a little, accustomed as he was to repeated refusals before granting a request. But that is not the way of the Italians ; they think they please better by doing at once whatever is desired of them. Corinne would have adopted this more natural way even if it had not been already the custom. She wore a light and elegant costume for the dance, her hair gathered into a silk net—Italian style —her eyes bright with pleasure, which made her even more fascinating than usual. . . . Prince Amalfi accompanied himself in the dance with castanets. Before Corinne commenced, she saluted the company gracefully, and, turning round, took the tambourine which Prince Amalfi presented to her. She then began the dance, beating the air with her tambourine—in all her movements showing a grace, a lissomeness, a blending of modesty and *abandon*, which gave the spectator some idea of the power exercised over the imagination by the Indian dancing-girls, when they are, so to speak, poets in the dance, expressing varied feelings by characteristic steps and picturesque attitudes.

Corinne was so well acquainted with the different attitudes which painters and sculptors have depicted, that by a slight movement of her arms, holding the tambourine sometimes above her head, sometimes in front of her, while the other hand ran over the bells with incredible swiftness, she would recall to mind the dancing-girls of Herculaneum, and present before the eye of painter or artist one idea after another in swift succession. It was not French dancing, so remarkable for the elegance and difficulty of its steps ; it was a talent much more closely related to imagination and feeling. The character of the music was expressed alternately by exactness or softness of movement. Corinne, dancing, made the onlookers sharers in her feelings, just as if she were improvising, playing the lyre, or designing figures ; every motion was to her as expressive as spoken language. The musicians looking at her were inspired to make the genius of their art more felt ; and it would be impossible to tell what passionate joy, what ardour of imagination thrilled at once all who were witnesses of this magic dancing, which carried them away into an ideal life where one dreams of happiness not to be found in this world.

There is a moment in this Neapolitan dance when the woman kneels, and the man turns round her, not as master, but as victor. How lovely and dignified was Corinne at this moment ! On her



TARANTELLA AT NAPLES
(From an Etching by B. Pinelli)

knees she was queen! and when she rose again, making her light cymbal resound, she seemed inspired with an enthusiasm of life, youth, and beauty, which made one feel as if she needed nothing more to complete her happiness. At the end of the dance, the man in his turn falls on his knees, and the woman dances round him. Corinne at this moment surpasses herself, if possible; her steps were so light as she circled round and round that the daintily shod feet flew over the boards like a flash of lightning; and when she raised one hand shaking her tambourine, and with the other signed to the prince to rise, all the men present would gladly have knelt as he had done.

This fascinating dance—any further description of which, after the above glowing account, would be superfluous—is supposed to have derived its name from the Tarantula, or venomous spider of Apulia. Much has been written about the *Tarantella* and *Tarantismos*, and such authors as Kircher, Porter, and others, have traced the dance to the peculiar effects caused by the bite of a spider whose scientific name is *Phalangium Apulium* (also called *Lycosea Tarantula*), to which the inhabitants of Calabria and Apulia give the name of Tarantola. The animal sometimes grows to the size of a pigeon's egg. Dr. Martimus Kähler, a Swedish physician, went to Apulia in 1756 to investigate the question of Tarantism. He came to the conclusion that it was not a disease caused by the bite of a spider, but that it was a form of hysteria, to which the inhabitants of Tarento are liable owing to the food they take, i.e. vegetables, oysters, and periwinkles. Be this as it may, the complaint is, according to medical opinion, curable by music and dancing. According to other authorities, the bite of the Tarantula produces convulsive movements which may have been styled dancing. Kircher, in his account of the *Tarantella*, relates that in Andria in the ducal palace an experiment by order of the Duchess was made. Tarentella spiders were caught and placed on little sticks laid horizontally in bowls full of water. Then musicians were fetched, and as soon as they began to play, the animals began to move their feet and jump in time to the music. When the musicians ceased to play,

the spiders ceased to dance. It seems from the account of the strange disease that quick rhythms were most effective as a cure, and Kircher gives the notation of the music.

Vergari in 1839 collected the result of observations made by doctors in Apulia and its neighbourhood, and says that the animating sound of the tune known as 'Tarantella' subdues the depressing effect of the poisonous bite of the spider. The dancing sometimes lasts three hours without a rest, and the patient behaves as if intoxicated. While dancing he carries green branches or gay ribbons, and likes to be dressed in gay colours. He hates black, and the sight of a person dressed in black greatly annoys him. The room in which he dances must be gaily adorned, and contain many mirrors. From more recent accounts we find that the Tarantismos of the fifteenth century was a nervous illness similar to the St. Vitus's Dance of to-day, and that, like the dance mania of the Middle Ages, like the Tigritiya of Abyssinia and like the dance epidemic of Madagascar, it took an endemic form. It is not surprising that music had a salutary influence on a disease, which, with all its outward symptoms of merriment, was strongly tinged with melancholy. Equally natural it seems that dancing as an exercise had a wholesome action on the malady; at various periods its therapeutic effect on disease has been recognised, and no doubt it may be placed in the same category as Turkish baths, massage, and other means used to expel poison from the body by strong agitation, to increase the circulation, and to promote the healthy action of the skin. A rather frivolous recollection crosses my mind as I write this. The incident occurred at a ball in Paris, where a young Englishman, very spare and yellow, evidently suffering from 'the spleen,' repeatedly invited the stoutest lady in the company to dance with him. The aunt of the damsel, alarmed at this very particular attention paid to her niece, asked the youthful Briton what his intentions were. 'Monsieur, est-ce pour épouser?' But, brought up in traditions of truthfulness, he replied, 'No—pour transpirer.'

Whatever may be the curative effect of the dance, the form of the Tarantella has been used by many celebrated composers—Bach, Chopin, Rossini, Mendelssohn. Weber's last movement of the Sonata in E Minor is a masterpiece. Auber, too, has excellent examples in his 'Muette de Portici,' and 'Fra Diavolo,' and Duprast likewise introduces one into 'Les Trovarelles.' The dance measure is a very wild one, and its vivacity only finds an equal among European dances in the Scotch reel.

In conclusion, just a word about the accompaniment of these popular dances : of course among those who made any pretensions to orchestral accompaniment the fiddle and some kind of flute or pipe would be used, but where these could not be had there were always the castanets and the tambourine, which by themselves were quite sufficient to mark the dancer's time. The former were great favourites among the people; Neapolitan ones were known by their great size. The latter is an instrument as old probably as Cybele, certainly as old as the frescoes of Herculaneum, where we see it in the hands of the Bacchantes, so that its use is sanctioned by classical customs. If then we see the *Tarantella* danced and the castanets rattled by a graceful 'Corinne,' our imagination may carry us back to some Greek grotto where in fancy we may assist at the celebration of some ancient bacchanal.

CHAPTER XI

THE DANCES OF THE EAST : INDIA, PERSIA, CHINA, JAPAN

INDIA

In the history of the human race, Asia, the cradle of mankind, is a remarkable quarter of the globe. Sir Edwin Arnold says that in Eastern lands 'light and life are larger' than with us, passions are stronger, and heart-storms are like their earthquakes and floods. Certainly the East unrolls before us a glitter and glamour so strange that it seems to be the creation of brain and eyes shaped differently from our own.

We must not expect to find in Asia what we are accustomed to see in the West; we must almost be prepared to find the order of things reversed. All through the East dancing is performed by professional hired women or boys, who go through their evolutions in order to afford pleasure to the spectators. There are very few steps, and the movements are mainly from the waist upwards; but *bayadères*, *nautchees*, or *Maikos* are true dancers; every part of their body lends itself to some expression, arms and hands, as well as eyes and features.

In India the nautches are famous; they are magnificent festivities given by the princes or other dignitaries of the country in honour of some guest or personage for whom they desire to show esteem. On these occasions a display of splendour takes place which contrasts greatly with the ordinary simple and frugal way of living of the high-caste natives.

In Bombay, the Asiatic Capua, the dancing-women, with their lithe figures and their languid eyes, remind us of the

beautiful women of Greece. When a nautch takes place the young girls, at a signal given by the host, appear with bare feet. The music is generally monotonous, and the nautchees sing while they dance ; in fact, the song is considered the chief



An Eastern Woman dancing before her Master
(*From an Engraving by G. Vitalba, after Francis Smith, 1769*)

part of the entertainment. They mostly express the passion of love with all the vicissitudes attendant on it - joy and fear, hope and jealousy, fury and delight ; and every look, every attitude, every arm movement has been studied and exquisitely

mimics the story. All dancing songs are not love songs, and occasionally some are introduced descriptive of incidents of Eastern life, such as war or the chase. The nautchees soon tire of their exertions, and generally several sets are hired for an entertainment ready to relieve one another. While they go through their gyrations the guests recline at their ease on couches, propped up with cushions, eating sweetmeats and fruit and drinking wines served by attendants. Some of the *bayaderes*



Nautchees

are covered with diamonds and precious stuffs; their gowns are very ample and full, after the fashion of the gowns used to-day in the 'skirt-dances;' there is also a great display of scarves. The music is soft, and occasionally consists of viols and tam-tams; the dancers wear anklets of bells, and the movement of their body is of a special undulating kind, impossible to describe and equally impossible to imitate.

The nautchees have the right to go where they choose, and

they are even allowed to enter the palaces of the princes, to sit down in their presence, and to talk to them freely.

Men also dance in India ; they are called Cathacks, and are between eighteen and twenty years old. Just like the *bayadères*, their performances consist of graceful poses and of scarf movements, and they are dressed in magnificent costumes.

The Coles of Chota Nagpore have many different dances, and some seem to be difficult of performance ; children are trained very early to learn them, and both boys and girls, decked with feathers and flowers, singing with musical voices, go through their mazy evolutions at certain festivals called 'Yatras.'

At Bhopal, Rousselet describes a strange egg dance, which sounds as if it were an almost incredible performance :

A female dancer carries on her head a wicker wheel, which is large and placed horizontally. All round this wheel are threads with a running knot. The music is monotonous and with a short rhythm. The dancer turns round and round quickly and places an egg in the knot, throwing it so as to tighten the noose. One after another the eggs are thrown into the knots, ending by forming a halo round the head of the dancer, who whirls faster and faster, and who, without stopping, takes the eggs out again as she has placed them. When they are all out, she breaks them on a plate to show the audience that there is no deception.

In Benares, the sacred city, with its 1,400 temples, girls gracefully and solemnly climb the steep *ghâts* which lead to the Ganges ; they carry on their heads the shining vase holding the muddy river water, suggesting by the movement of their arms the classical Canephora. In this holy city, at the festival of Ganesa, *bayadères* richly dressed go through a solemn scarf dance ; the performers in this case are young widows who have never been wives, and they only dance in religious ceremonies, for they are consecrated to divine service and lead a very secluded life. All over India there are ritual dances, as I have already mentioned in the chapter devoted to that subject.

Mrs. Murray-Aynsley describes the Kulu religious dances performed by men before palanquins in which idols are conveyed and in the presence of the Raja; the author says that these people are not Buddhists, but that their religion partakes of Hinduism. She also gives an interesting account of the inhabitants of the Spiti Valley, who in that high and cold region of the Himalayas dance for hours, enjoying the violent exercise. Men and women dance together to the melody of their own voices. The same traveller speaks of dances performed after polo in Tibet :—

Each dancer holds on to the one in front of him, as in the game of fox and goose. The two strings of dancers wind in and out; occasionally they divide and dance opposite, advancing and receding with a slow undulating movement, which gradually becomes more energetic as they warm to their work. An adjournment is then made to the courtyard of a private house behind the bazaar. Mock sword fights take place there between two combatants, also sword dances with two crossed weapons laid on the ground, precisely like the sword dances which are performed at our Highland gatherings in the present day.

Another writer mentions an annual aboriginal dance in the Khassia Hills; generally it takes place in May, but the Raja fixes the exact date. The special *raison d'être* of the dance is the display of all unmarried girls from far and near over the mountains to choose or to be chosen by suitable husbands. Every kind of finery is displayed for the occasion; silk robes, heavily embroidered, are worn; the rich girls have crowns of gold or silver, the poor ones only flowers in their hair. The music is performed by bagpipes and drums.

A well-brought-up Khassia maiden of the superior class is taught that the perfection of dancing is to go round in a circle with the smallest possible amount of movement; not even an eyelid is to be lifted, her hands are to hang down by her side, and her feet are to be rigidly placed together, knees and ankle-bones touching each other. In this position she wriggles round the circle with a curious heel-and-toe motion—occasionally solemnly and slowly pirouetting round. The men amply compensate for the unexcited quietude of the girls; they jig, they leap, they hop, they wave arms, legs,

umbrellas and knives about in the wildest confusion, accompanying their movements with the most savage war-whoops, signifying nothing.

This description is from a quotation made by Mrs. Murray-Aynsley.

Some of the former ritual dances have degenerated by becoming secular; among others, the Gopis dance, which is now performed in a dark room, and which has an orgiastic character. Formerly it must have been a rite connected with the milking-feasts, for the Gopis are milkmaids and attendants on the god Krishna. In the South Kensington Museum a model represents Krishna dancing with his Gopis.

The sacred volumes of India order every magistrate to keep a Court set of dancers. 'He shall retain in his service great numbers of buffoons or parasites, jesters and dancers, and athletes.' To the wealthy pagodas belong whole tribes of female dancers, called *bayadères*—the word originating from the Portuguese *balladiera*; in Hindustani they are called *Devadási*. They are responsible for the cleaning of the temple, and they must dance twice daily at least before the idol. The first dance is an expiation rite for their own sins; the second symbolises an intercession for the forgiveness of their neighbours' sins. This *corps de ballet* is recruited by the priests, and mostly among the daughters of the weavers; the girls are called divine spouses, and join the community at the age of nine. It behoves the ancient *bayadères* to instruct the novices not only in the dance, but in singing, reading, and writing. Once the *bayadère* is consecrated as a 'divine spouse,' she cannot return to her family: she belongs body and soul to the pagoda, which feeds, dresses, and lodges her for life.

The magnates of India have often whole troops of nautch girls at their service; these dancers dress with great luxury, and resort to every artifice to enhance and to preserve their beauty.

There are several pretty myths connected with the dance in the religion which holds sway over the shores of the Ganges: Krishna and his cycle of deities personify the harmony of

the spheres. Tchamouda, whose light feet continually tread rhythmically on Brahma's egg (the globe), charms the heavenly court by his performance, together with *thirty-five millions* of nymphs, specially gifted with all the talents which make good dancers. One of the rewards prophesied by the priests to the faithful worshippers in after life is this enchanting sight of armies of *bayadères* delighting their eyes and ears by dance and music, with Tchamouda as their leader.

Considering the importance given to the dance by the religion of the country, the number of dancers employed, the idea that the dance is born in heaven, we cannot wonder that in former times the Hindoos began each day with a special dance consecrated to the sun.

PERSIA

Mahometan views concerning music and dancing have greatly narrowed the circle of amusements in Persia. Dancing girls were numerous at Court until the reigning family ascended the throne of Persia ; but at present the dance is given up to women of low condition and of slack morality, or to young boys dressed as women. Early Persian poets celebrate the beauty of the dancing girls and the charm of their voices, and at one time there must have been a great deal of dancing in the country and probably some ritual dances ; but in Persia the student of the history of the dance meets with the same difficulties in his investigations as he does in Scotland—the religion of the country has endeavoured not only to suppress the pastime, but also to forbid any record of it. Yet in some remote provinces of Persia there is dancing performed by peasants at night, and at Teheran itself Georgian girls are employed as dancers ; in Kurdistan and in Khorassan we also find traces of the art. Mr. E. G. Browne speaks with admiration of the dancing boys of Persia ; he praises their 'elaborate posturing, which is usually more remarkable for acrobatic skill than for grace, at any rate according to our ideas.'

In Buzabatt, near Kashan, it is curious to notice that a

Tarantella dance exists just as in Sicily. If anyone has been poisoned by the spider called *stellis*, he is advised to dance to the sound of music. (See 'Tarantella,' in chapter on the Dances of Italy.)

CHINA

Who can imagine a mandarin dancing a polka or a cotillon? Who can picture to himself a woman waltzing in the land of mutilated feet? But must dancing necessarily be performed according to our Western ideas? Why cannot the Chinaman have dances of his own? Must a Highlander dance the fandango, or a Frenchman dance a jig?

In all Asiatic dances agility and liveliness are seldom attempted: they would be looked upon as unbecoming and undignified. Dancing in its real form—e.g. symmetric movements and swayings to the accompaniment of drum and music—has existed in China from prehistoric times up to this very day. Some of the highest contemporary authorities deny the existence of dancing in China, excepting as performed in the theatre and as executed by professional women or boys for the pleasure of mandarins; but I have irrefragable evidence of ritic dancing from accounts of English ambassadors, of missionaries—both French and British—and from the Government report by Von Aalst. If little has been written about Chinese dancing, it may be for two reasons: one, that the ordinary traveller—the commercial or political resident in the East—usually does not know the language, has a fine contempt for the manners of the land, and is therefore hardly, if ever, admitted to the intimacy of the people; his judgment would thus merely be a sweeping one of things just around him. The other reason is that the true student the man who knows the Chinese tongue and who has studied the habits of the Celestials—would probably consider the dance a frivolous amusement, too trifling to be put on record.

In countries where art is still in its infancy, music and dancing are inseparable, and more or less dependent on one

another. The arts of music and dancing separated when each grew more perfect, for it became impossible for one individual satisfactorily to execute both. In a land like China, where art is only progressing at a snail's pace, music and dancing are still intimately connected. The dancer is accompanied by voice or instrument; for the same reason in China the music-master is also dancing-master—no sinecure—for the art of gesture, the science of posture, are included in the term dance. It is not a mere gyration but a pantomime, a mimic representation of feelings, grave or amorous. The most ancient dances of China were representations of the scenes of daily life: the field labour, the harvesting pleasures, the toils of war, the enjoyment of peace.

The hierarchic order of the dance is very old in China. Every member of the State was allotted a given number of dancers. In the Emperor's palace there were eight dances, each performed by eight different dancers, the *corps de ballet* thus numbering sixty-four. The provincial kings had six dances, each performed by six sets of six dancers, and so on.

Some of the dances are called *small dances*, because they are learnt in infancy; and of these there are five which take their name from an object held in the hand of the performer. The sixth dance was called the Man's dance, because it was performed with empty hands.

Other dances are called *Ancient or Great*; they were only learnt after the age of twenty. The Chinese word for dance is Ou. Dancing-masters were highly honoured and belonged to the second class of mandarins; each one had two body-guards, two scribes, two assistants, and twenty pupils. The dancing-master was also the director of music. Two special seasons call for the dance—the winter solstice, when heaven is worshipped; and the summer solstice, when the earth is worshipped. These were sacrificial dances.

The Emperor Shun, who lived in 2255 B.C., was the first to introduce the dance into the ceremonies; in the third year of Yung-Ming, A.D. 485, an Imperial decree ordered the dance

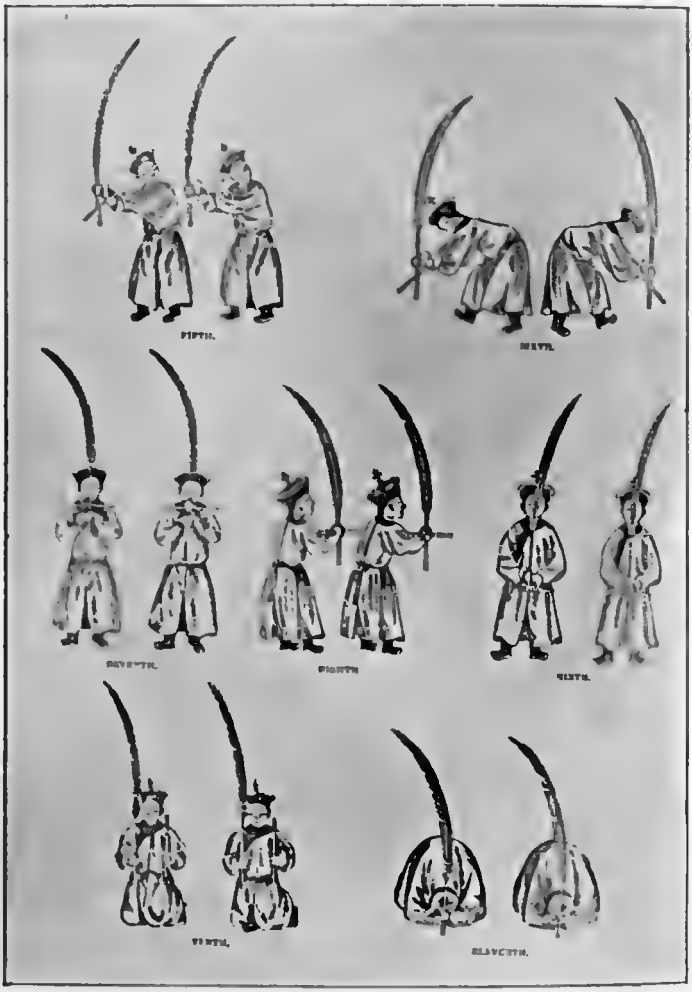
to be kept as a part of the Confucian rites. The Emperor Chên-Kuan, A.D. 650, introduced military dances into the ritual. There were civil dancers, who held a long feather in one hand and a stick in the other, dressed in full Court dress, and military dancers, who wore full uniform and held a shield in one hand and an axe in the other.



First four figures of the Chinese Ritual Dance
(*From 'Chinese Music,' by J. A. van Aalst, Shanghai, 1884*)

During the present dynasty military dances have been abolished, and there remain only thirty-six different civil dances with two leaders each. The long feather is a peacock's ; formerly three were tied together, forming a trident ; the little

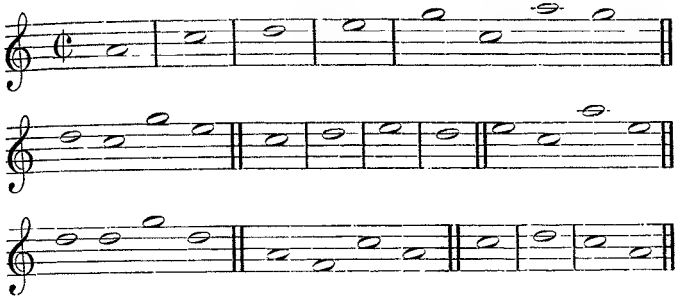
stick which each dancer holds in his left hand was once a small flute with three holes.



Chinese Ritual Dance

(From 'Chinese Music,' by J. A. van Aalst, Shanghai, 1884)

HYMN DURING WHICH THE MANDARINS DANCE IN HONOUR OF CONFUCIUS



The music of the hymn to which the ritic dance is performed is given by Van Aalst, and an example of it is copied above. One of the strophes reads as follows in the translation: 'I think of thy bright virtue. The jade music ends. The music of metal is first heard ; of living men there was none like him. Truly his teaching is in all respects complete.'

In the temples of Agriculture, and in those of Ancestors, special days are appointed for the worship of the spirit of Confucius and other departed sages. The whole learned class worships Confucius. During the ceremonies the Emperor himself is supposed to attend ; but if his absence is unavoidable, he deputes one of his sons or some high dignitary to superintend the evolution of the dances. The hymn has six strophes, but only during the second, third, and fourth, do the dances take place.

The dance in China also takes the form of an act of homage to the Sovereign. Special mandarins are appointed for this performance. They dance before the Emperor with graceful and dignified mien and with precise movements, then they salute and retire. The greatest in the land in the most gorgeous dresses perform this dance, of which the smallest detail is previously regulated and faithfully observed. The positions are fixed with mathematical accuracy. These ritic

dances are all performed by men, and at the imperial palace a grand sight may be witnessed when men coming from all parts of Asia render tribute to the Emperor by songs and dances, in their varied costumes, and with their different instruments and slow plaintive airs.

Just as the Emperor is honoured by a dance, so he confers a mark of favour to ambassadors by receiving them with splendid dances. Once, when the dance was at its glory in China, the Emperor showed the appreciation he felt for his viceroys by the number of the dances with which he received them when they came into his presence. If he was displeased with their administration he would reprove them silently by allowing only a few dances, performed by a small number of *coryphées*.

Emperors did not disdain the study of the dance or its performance in public ; they generally devoted the autumn to the former, and the spring to the latter, and the feast of Ancestors was the greatest occasion for the dance. In 1719, the son of the Emperor danced before his father and the whole assembled Court. In some of these ceremonies varied coloured lanterns are carried and figures of all sorts are formed, especially letters. The habits of precision of the Chinese greatly assist in the success of such entertainments.

Bell speaks of having received an invitation to dinner from the Emperor's ninth son. The entertainment was magnificent, and accompanied by music, dancing, and a kind of comedy ; and several ambassadors write about dances which were performed at banquets. Professional female dancers are called 'talented women.'

JAPAN

A great many qualities are required of a Japanese dancing girl, or Maiko ; she must be young, beautiful, graceful, musical, and witty. No feast in Japan is considered complete without the Maikos, who are taught at an early age to perform their figures to the chant of the national poems. Dancer and singer are one. When the Maiko has lost the first blush

of youth she makes place for others, becomes a Geisha-girl, and accompanies the dancers, strumming and chanting the tune of the melody. A Maiko moves very slowly and in gliding fashion ; but above all she is an artist in posturing, and she continually changes from one perfect pose to another. She wears very elaborate gowns, blue or red, embroidered with maple leaves, roses, or other pretty devices. The sash is of rich brocade, and in her jet black hair flowers are never wanting. As a rule, the Maikos form groups of four, posing, gliding, twisting, turning, and moving—a perfect kaleidoscope of colours —before the spectators, who recline against bolsters and on mats, and who are fanned by girls whose mission it is also to converse agreeably ; others bring in refreshments, ice, fruits, and wines. On arrival at the tea-house where the dancing takes place, travellers are met by bright-faced servant-maids, who immediately proceed to take off their visitors' boots, laughing and chattering the while. The strangers are then invited to go into the large reception-room upstairs ; they have to walk on bamboo matting one inch thick, delightfully soft and elastic to the pressure of the foot. In this reception-room no furniture will be found, and one has to sit on one's heels or else recline on the ground with the head on a bolster. The light of the room is generally dim and mysterious and shed by a lamp on a high pedestal. A paper screen is drawn away at the end of the room, and the Geisha girls, sitting in semicircle, play their instrument ; it is louder and coarser in tone than a mandoline, and is played by a long flat piece of ivory. They prelude with a song, which sounds like a wail, after which a dancer comes forward, poses for an instant, then moves slowly, swaying from side to side ; there are no definite steps, and the music does not appear to be in any particular time. A Japanese dance which I have seen was a pantomime portraying the mysteries of the toilette ; first the hair was done, one hand being used to indicate the comb, whilst the other was held out as the looking-glass. When the hair was completed, the arranging of the dress, the tying of the obi or sash, were indicated by

varied gesture. Finally, the Maiko pretended to survey herself in a long mirror, and her expression conveyed that she was satisfied with herself. With a kind of curtsey she ended this



Japanese Fan Dance
(*From a Japanese Painting*)

purely mimic dance, in which all the movements were slow, but extremely graceful and artistic. What is surprising in a Japanese Maiko is the wonderful control she has over her

facial and other muscles. She appears to be able to move them at will, independent of one another; for instance, she will move her ears or the small muscles of her nose with absolute ease.

The fan dance, interpreted by young girls with various movements, figures, and poses, is one of many favourite Japanese dances. Men seldom dance in Japan except to show off some choregraphic agility usually inspired by the saki fumes; but they take a part in the circular dances which belong to the family banquets, and which are as diversified as they are ancient.

Japan has also its ritual dances, and probably many more than I have been able to discover. Among others is the *Shinto* dance, a sacred chorus described by Dresser in 1882, in which priestesses and little children form solemn and stately steps to slow music, alternating the figures of the dance with prostrations before some little tables on which the sistrums are alternately placed and removed either to be worshipped or to be shaken during the dance.

Altogether, the beautiful Maikos in their handsome gowns perform some of the most pleasing dances in the world, a harmonious and artistic feast for eyes and ears.

CHAPTER XII

THE BALLET

THE history of the ballet is interesting, for in its widest sense it is also the history of our modern opera ; but if we take the ballet in its more exclusive meaning, its course is scarcely at present an elevated one.

It is customary to attribute the invention of the ballet, like the invention of everything else, to the Egyptians, who in their dances personified the movements of stars and planets ; and a short walk through the galleries of the British Museum will convince the observer that the Egyptians had large troops of dancing girls performing to music during banquets many centuries before our era. Again, the Greeks are sometimes said to be the originators of the ballet ; the *Hyporchemes*, graceful dances performed either by the whole 'chorus' or by a few dancers chosen for their proficiency, imitated actions and personified mythological or daily events ; no definite rule was given, but the movements and figures adapted themselves to the poetry which was recited. The beautiful Greek representation of the Dance of the Hours in the Paris Museum may serve as a typical form of ballet movements.

Many attribute the source of the ballet to the Roman pantomimes, and there may be some truth in all these assertions ; but the real home of the ballet was Italy, and thence it has been developed and perfected in France. It was not introduced into England until the eighteenth century, when Italian *intermezzi* were performed at York Buildings. In the first Italian operas

given in London we find hardly any mention of a ballet. It was only during the regency of Lord Middlesex that a ballet-master was duly appointed and that dancers were taken into salary.

We must therefore go to other nations before describing the English ballet. The real ballet was a union of music, poetry, and dance, for which poets did not disdain to write the libretto; for instance, in a ballet performed by Marie Antoinette, when she was still Archduchess of Austria, the libretto was written by Metastasio, the music by Gluck, and the interpreters were imperial princes and princesses. In the beginning the ballet was essentially a Court entertainment, and the first on record took place in Italy in 1489 at the wedding of the Duke of Milan. With the Medici the splendid dance entertainments were introduced into France, Catherine de' Medici, while plotting the massacre of St. Bartholomew, found pleasure in witnessing the antics of a troupe of Italian players called 'I Gelosi,' whose acting was chiefly mimic and varied with comic dances. The Tambourine dance, given on p. 338, represents the characters of Gian Farina, Fracischina, and Mezzetin in one of those early ballets. The 'Ballet Comique de la Reyne' marks an era in the history of the opera, for here we find for the first time the artistic combination of dramatic fiction with the dance and music. Baltasarini, better known as Beaujoyeulx, was the author, composer, and ballet-master of this entertainment, which was held in 1581, and he was so successful with it that the sombre Catherine rewarded him by making him both Chamberlain and Intendant de Musique. In giving to his ballet the title of 'Comique,' he meant to imply that it was a ballet and a comedy as well—a comedy because it had a connected plot which was carried out in a series of scenes, and a ballet because the chief events of the entertainment were portrayed by dances and masques.

In the sixteenth century it was generally some great personage who conceived the idea of giving a dance entertainment, and who sought out a poet and ordered him to write a libretto;

then he sent for a musician and asked him to compose the score; a painter was required to superintend the artistic effect of the scenery; a ballet-master, who above all was a good actor, was put in charge of the choregraphic part of the performance. This collaboration resulted in a work of art in which noblemen, and even the princes of royal blood, delighted to distinguish themselves. Henri IV. and Sully were great lovers of the ballet; Louis XIII. danced in some of the ballets; Henri IV. had a special dancing-room built in the Arsenal. Richelieu chose the ballet as a means of expressing his political opinions; even the great Louis XIV. did not think it beneath his dignity to perform various characters in the ballets, and he enjoyed this pastime until he became too corpulent of figure, when he withdrew because he feared to make himself the object of sarcasm. Lulli, by order of the king, had to compose the music for these entertainments, and Benserade had to write the story: this poet really raised the ballet to a special excellence. Lulli also composed the score for the interludes of Molière's plays; the great author had learnt much from the Italian strolling players, and his innovation of *intermezzi* in the plays was largely due to the knowledge he had gathered from a troupe called 'Li Comici Fedeli.'

In the reign of Louis XIV. even abstract ideas were represented in ballets; for instance, when the king married Marie Thérèse, the famous expression 'Il n'y a plus de Pyrénées' was the subject of a ballet in which two nymphs—a French one and a Spanish one—sang a duet, while half the dancers wore Spanish, the other half French costume.

Under Louis XIV. ballets were expensive pleasures, for musicians and machinists had to come from Italy. When Louis XIV. lost his symmetry of figure and retired from the ballet, the princes and noblemen did likewise, and the ballet lost by it. The Ballet de la Cour always ended with a surprise (fully expected); for instance, a banquet was suddenly served, or a concert was given. Occasionally the surprise took the form of a present for each guest. This part of the ballet was called

'Sapate.' Whole ballets were called thus, the main object in them being to give and to receive presents.

Moral ballets also took place, especially at the Court of Savoy; sentences suitable for copy-books were put into mimic action. At Turin in 1634 a ballet was given, and called 'Truth —the Enemy of Appearance,' and it began with a chorus of *false* notes.

The Duchesse du Maine invented the ballet-pantomime. It was the first introduction of a ballet without words, and it represented the fourth act of Corneille's 'Horace,' set to music by Mouret. The principal dancers were Balan and Prévost, and they not only moved their audience to tears, but were themselves quite overcome with emotion. A wag of the time, who had witnessed this ballet and noticed the intensity of feeling roused by the mimetic rendering of Corneille's famous 'Qu'il mourût,' wrote to Noverre, a great ballet-master of the period, suggesting that La Rochefoucauld's Maxims should be put in a *ballet d'action*! Voltaire calls Noverre a genius, and no doubt he did much both for the ballet and for preserving its history; and he faithfully carried out the works of Gluck and Piccini.

When the ballet left the Court, and before it finally came on the stage, it took refuge in the colleges, where Lulli's and Quinault's ballets were a feature at distributions of prizes.

Before the time of Lulli only men danced in public, and they were disguised as women whenever the action required the introduction of nymphs or sirens. The composer had the courage to admit women as dancers, and gradually we see their popularity wax and that of the male dancer wane. At present the idea of a male ballet-dancer has something ludicrous in it, and though men usually form part of ballets, they rarely now take a prominent share. The poet Southey declares that a male dancer ought to be hamstrung.

Ballet-dancers must pre-eminently possess dramatic gifts, and should personify Shakespeare's saying: 'Spirits which by mine art I have from their confines called to enact my present

fancies.' Englishwomen have very rarely become famous dancers. Lola Montez, however, was an Englishwoman with a foreign *nom de guerre*. Her career was short in England, for it is said of her that during the second rehearsal she got into such a temper with the *impresario* that she broke her umbrella over his head, after which her engagement was cancelled. The great dancing school for the ballet is at Milan, in the Scala ; there I have seen the tuition given to the young dancers and the hard work they have to perform. In the interest of this volume I have also witnessed the dancing lessons given to the *corps de ballet* at the Paris Opera-house, and I have been quite astonished to find that the profession of a ballet-dancer is a very arduous one. Not only must the beginner go through weary —often painful—exercises, but the *première danseuse* must not neglect her daily gymnastic practices. When I was in Paris for the purpose of studying this question I brought an introduction to Mlle. Mauri, the great dancer of the Opéra. I called on her, but found she was at the theatre ; and the servant told me her mistress was 'working.' So she was, hard at work, about 11 A.M., on the large stage of the Opéra, attired in knickerbockers, for her practice.

The corps de ballet, besides the men which belong to it, is composed (and I think the same hierarchy exists in the London ballet) of *première* and *deuxième danseuses*, of a certain number of *marcheuses*, whose duty it is to make graceful movements and to help in forming the figures, and of *rats* or beginners.

Fifty years ago the Haymarket corps de ballet numbered sixteen men and sixteen women, besides three male and nine female dancers of the first and second rank.

The *rats* have to begin in early youth, and they are often articled for seven years. In Paris they are articled for five years. Unless they begin very young, they can never expect to be stars, and the highest position they may attain is that of *marcheuses*. Dr. Véron, who has made the ballet a special study, reports that the dancer may have to pay for her exercises by

enlargement of the knee and toe joint, displacement of the calf, &c., and he also noticed that the ballet-girls were subject to chronic colds in the head ; but no doubt this is due more to the draughts behind the scenes and to the light apparel they wear than to the actual exercise of the dance.

The dress worn by ballet-dancers has greatly varied at different times. According to Noverre, Madame Tallien introduced transparent fabrics among the dancers, and the writer compares them to the women of Sparta, who wore no clothes for the dance. Taglioni wore skirts down to her ankles ; her father was a ballet-master, and when she was very young she was very ill-shaped—almost a hunchback. Her father was extremely strict with her and made her work hard ; he also always recommended her to be modest in dress, in movement, and in expression. 'Vestris Ier,' on the other hand, told his pupils to use all the coquetry in their power.

Gaetan Vestris lived in the middle of the last century, and modestly styled himself 'le diou de la danse.' Being an Italian (a Florentine ; the real name was Vestri) he could not pronounce French well, and his appellation of 'le diou de la danse' stuck to him. He also called himself Vestris Ier, or Vestris le Grand. When the 'dancing deity' became old, his son Auguste replaced him. The old man then would demurely say : 'My son Auguste is a better dancer than I am, for he had Gaetan Vestris as a father, an advantage which nature had denied to me.' There was, however, some foundation for the pride of Gaetano Apolline Baltassare Vestris, for he was the best male dancer that Europe ever produced ; but he did not hide his light under a bushel. He used to say that his century had only produced three great men—himself, Frederic II., and Voltaire.[1] The Marquise de Créqui relates quaint stories about 'le vieux coryphée.' He taught her and all the nobility the arts of *la contenance* and *la révérence*, and his speeches were many and grandiloquent ; but his mental culture was great, and many

[1] Ses yeux ne daignaient voir de son temps sur la terre
Que trois grands hommes, lui, Frédéric et Voltaire.—BERCHOUX.

clever men sought his acquaintance. When Gluck composed his 'Iphigenia in Aulis' (1774), Gaetan Vestris asked him to write a *chaconne* for his son Auguste, who was to dance in this opera. Gluck refused, on the plea that the Greeks knew nothing about the *chaconne*. 'Did they not?' replied Gaetan.



Vestris dancing the Goose-step
(*From an Engraving by F. Bartolozzi, after George Dance*, 1781)

'I am sorry for them! But you must write a *chaconne* for my son, because I am "le diou de la danse."' Gluck, irritated, said, 'Well, if you are the "diou de la danse," go and dance in heaven, and not in my opera;' but, nevertheless, the *chaconne* was written.

A parallel to Vestris can be found in another dancer and

teacher—his predecessor, the famous Marcel, whose name is closely connected with the menuet. His dancing was only indifferent, but he was a wonderful master, and he introduced first the fashion of walking through the menuet with the whole foot; before him it was always tripped on tip-toe. Marcel's menuet was the 'Menuet du Dauphin.' To him is also due the *coup de talon* and a side-step which he invented for the ladies, whose long trains embarrassed them. Marcel's lessons were very highly paid, and all the Court circle went to him for instruction. His language was by no means choice, and, according to letters of the time, it was amusing to notice the contrast between his deep obeisances and his brusque remarks to his royal pupils. When they arrived in his *salon*, which was lined with looking-glasses, he received them sitting in a big armchair, with all the magnificent air of Louis XIV. Every pupil had to salute him according to rule, and then to put a coin (*écu de 6 francs*) in a vase standing on the chimney. Lord Chesterfield urged his son to attend Marcel's academy. Noverre—already mentioned—became a pupil of Marcel in 1740, and from his letters we have many amusing details about the author of the saying, 'Que de choses dans un menuet!' Marcel had become very gouty, and one day was unable to give Noverre his lesson; the young man suggested he should teach him his steps from his armchair by means of demonstrations with his fingers. Noverre was quick at learning, and Marcel showed him an intricate dance—a rondeau—in this new fashion.

In 1750 'Léandre et Héro,' a ballet-opera, was given in Paris, and the audience of that day had the satisfaction of seeing the two greatest dancers performing together—namely, Vestris I. and Madame Camargo, who introduced the short skirts on the stage. She was much beloved by all, and was received in the best and strictest set of Paris. She began to show off the dancing tricks, such as balancing the whole body on the point of the toe, &c., which are now too familiar. She nearly always improvised. Her rival was Mlle. Sallé, who, on the contrary, followed the true classical traditions,

and who came to England in 1734, while Handel was director of the Queen's Theatre. She was extraordinarily popular; people fought at the door of the theatre to get in, and guineas and banknotes were showered on her.

Mlle. Guimard was the next favourite of the Paris ballet. She was a contemporary of Auguste Vestris, and made her *début* at the age of thirteen. For twenty-eight years she was the idol of the public. She was so thin that she was nicknamed the spider. Her expenditure was most extravagant: she had a magnificent house built for her with a bijou theatre erected in it, in which the boxes were hung with pink silk and ornamented with silver braid. Madeleine Guimard was very kind-hearted. While her house was in construction she noticed a young painter who was decorating her walls with frescoes, and who looked very sad. Having spoken to him and questioned him, she learnt that he was very poor and could not continue his studies. She immediately obtained an allowance for him, which allowed David—for it was he—to go to Rome. The painter Fragonard also made some of the frescoes of her house; Houdon moulded the dancer's foot; and when a piece of stage scenery injured and broke Madeleine Guimard's arm, a mass for her recovery was said at Notre-Dame. Marie Antoinette consulted her on all matters of the toilet. The dancer was very old when she first came to England. The *impresarios* of this country found great difficulty in procuring first-rate dancers at all; it was only when they had completely lost their youth that they consented to cross the Channel, but as a rule they managed to strike off twenty or twenty-five years in the process. Thus Guimard left Paris aged sixty, and reached London aged thirty-five.

A notice of Covent Garden in March 1734 announced 'The Way of the World, with entertainments of dancing, particularly the Scottish dance by Mr. Glover and Mrs. Laguerre, Mr. le Sac and Miss Boston, Mr. de la Garde and Mrs. Ogden, with a new dance called Pigmalion, performed by Mr. Malter and Mlle. Sallé.' The ballet of 'Pygmalion and Galatea' had

been composed by J.-J. Rousseau, but Mlle. Sallé arranged a 'Pygmalion' of her own which much surpassed Rousseau's. She was a very clever woman, and claimed friendship with many eminent men of her time, both in France and England. Among others, Locke was one of her friends. Voltaire was her devoted admirer, but he divided his enthusiasm between her and Camargo. His verses on the two ballerines are famous :

> Ah, Camargo, que vous êtes brillante,
> Mais que Sallé, grands dieux ! vous êtes ravissante.
> Que vos pas sont légers, et que les siens sont doux.
> Elle est inimitable, et vous êtes nouvelle.
> Les nymphes sautent comme vous,
> Mais les Grâces dansent comme elle.

The English public became tired of seeing only aged dancers on its stage, in spite of the rejuvenising system they underwent while crossing the Channel, and thus in 1821 Ebers sent over to Paris to make some better arrangements. So important was this considered that the negotiations had to be made through the British ambassador, who conferred on the subject with the Baron de la Ferté, the Intendant of the Royal Theatre in Paris. Mlle. Noblet was engaged on this occasion ; she was to have 550*l.* for the two months of the season, and 25*l.* expenses.

In 1824 the expenses of the ballet at the King's Theatre, London, were :

M. Aumer .	£1,000	Idalise . .	£600
Mlle. Aumer .	600	Le Blond . .	600
M. Albert . .	1,000	Legros . .	1,200
Beauregard . .	300	Noblet . .	800
Ferdinand . .	700	Venafra . .	300
Guillet . .	400	The two Vestris .	1,900

The golden period for the ballet in England was from 1820 to 1850 at the King's Theatre, which afterwards became Her Majesty's. Great composers and great poets wrote the ballets

of the time. Carlotta Grisi, whose success was immense in 'Giselle,' had three famous men working for this ballet: H. Heine furnished the subject, Théophile Gautier the scenario, and Adolphe Adam the music.

In Vienna, Beethoven wrote 'Prometheus,' a ballet which was given at the Burg-Theater in March 1801. It had a great run, and was almost immediately published as a pianoforte solo. Haydn and Beethoven had some bitter words over this ballet. Another was composed for Carlotta Grisi on Victor Hugo's theme 'Esmeralda' (taken from 'Notre-Dame de Paris').

The public of Her Majesty's had the good fortune to see Fanny Elssler, a daughter of Haydn's copyist, and Cerito dancing the menuet of 'Don Giovanni.' Of all ballet-dancers, the most familiar name is that of Taglioni, whom some may remember. She has been immortalised by Thackeray, and in her time gave her name to a stage-coach and to a greatcoat. Taglioni died in 1884.

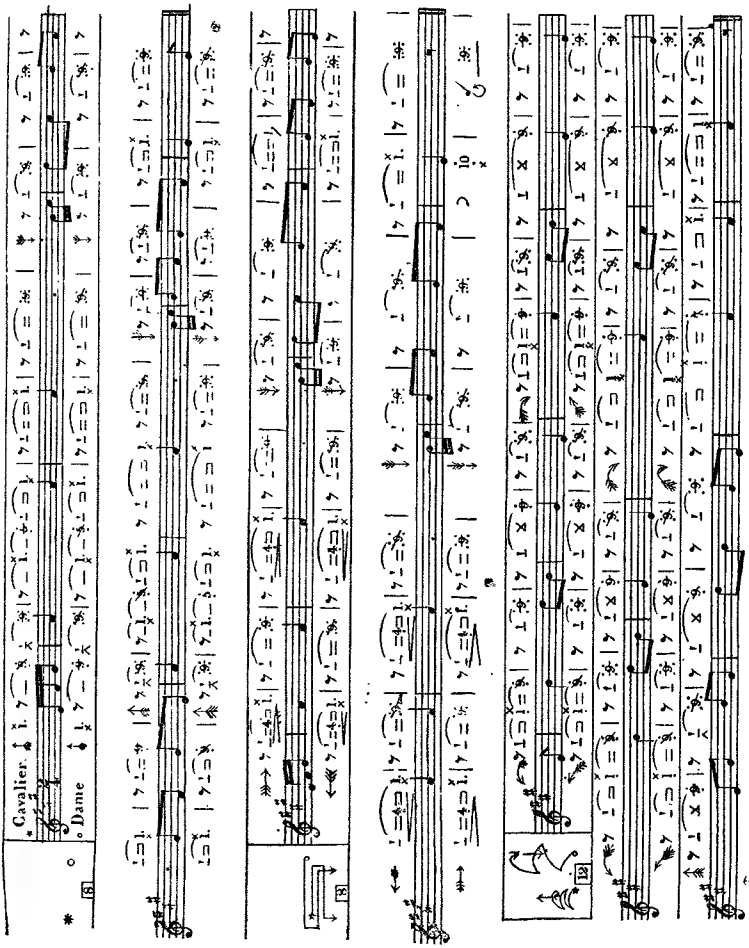
'La Sylphide' was a famous dance of Elssler's. She was a perfect actress, and could adopt every style. Admirers went so far as to call her the greatest dramatic actress of this century. She was a German with coal-black hair, and must have been very strong. According to Henry Bauer, when she was crossing over to New York, a thief entered her cabin with the purpose of stealing the jewel-box which she kept under her pillow. As he approached her she gave him one kick in the chest, and killed the man on the spot. In America her dancing created such enthusiasm that it is said 'Divines offered her their pews at meeting-houses.'

The *Cachucha* was a speciality and, so to speak, an invention of Carlotta Grisi's, and is not, as commonly believed, a national Spanish dance. The word 'Cachucha' corresponds to anything light and charming; why in this country it is constantly called and spelt 'Cachuca' I do not know.

Occasionally the figures of the ballet are drawn in chalk (for rehearsals) on the floor of the stage. Several authors have written about choregraphy or the art of representing

steps by means of conventional signs. Feuillet's work is of note.

The best book written on the ballet—on the ancient ballet —is by le Père Ménestrier (again an ecclesiastic !) Noverre's letters are also good, but altogether the literature of the ballet



Choregraphy

is poor. It is perhaps not generally known that Mozart wrote twelve pieces for Noverre's ballet 'Les Petits Riens,' and that the music is in existence.

Among the numerous portraits of famous ballet-dancers, I have chosen that of Giovanna Baccelli by Gainsborough. This dancer is mentioned by Walpole, and was a great favourite of the Duke of Dorset. A foot-note in Taylor's 'Life of Sir Joshua Reynolds'—who also painted her—says 'she danced at Paris wearing the Duke's garter as a bandeau.' Was its 'Honi soit qui maly pense' ever so appropriate since the order was founded?



Greek Dancing Lesson
(*From a Vase Painting in the British Museum about* 450 B.C.)

Baccelli lived for some time at Knole, and died in Sackville Street in May 1801, 'generally respected for her benevolence.'

It has been shown that most famous ballet-masters have also been famous dancers, but the best teachers of dancing, in my opinion, are not men, but women. The ancient Greeks, who gave such great thought and care to all arts, employed women as dancing teachers. Socrates went to Aspasia to learn the Terpsichorean art. On a vase in the collection at the British Museum, two men learn to dance from a woman who holds in her hand a 'tawse,' and seems ready to apply it for every faulty step. In the present illustration the teacher only holds



SIGNORA BACCELLI

a staff, and the learners are women, one of whom plays with *crotolas*, the ancient castanets. It will be seen how graceful and dignified the Greek teacher is, giving her lesson about 450 years B.C., compared with the dancing-master who holds out his coat-tails, and kicks away an imaginary dress tail while his left hand holds the kit. And in this other picture of Collett's, who is the most ludicrous, the fat grown-up pupil



Grown Ladies taught to Dance
(*From an Engraving after J. Collett, circa* 1769)

or the lean emphatic master? The old piper makes a more picturesque teacher as he skirls his native airs and instructs the lads and lasses in the mysteries of reel and strathspey.

The art of dancing must be learnt very young. In Spain children dance before they can speak, and in that country we still find to-day perfect dancing among all classes, high and



Grown Gentlemen taught to Dance
(*From an Engraving after J. Collet*, 1768)



Highland Dancing Lesson
From a Print by Frederick Taylor, 1844)

low. Traditions from Spain have gone over to South America, where the 'Zamacueca' delights the traveller in Chili and Peru. The 'Zamacueca' is an inimitable dance, in which the hand-



The Dancing Lesson
(*From an engraving after F. Heilbuth*)

kerchief plays a prominent part. The pantomime of the dance is expressive; it is accompanied by the guitar, the vijuela or harp, and always by a song, nasal and piercing, delivered by

aged women. Only one couple perform at a time, but the whole audience are interested in them ; they all clink their spurs, thump table, floor, or guitar wood in time ; they speak to the dancers and advise them, very much reminding us of similar scenes in an Irish cabin.



La Zamacueca

The handkerchief has been a great accessory in the dance ; but still greater have been the castanets and the fan. Both have a literature. The history of the castanets has been written in a most scientific manner by a Spanish priest. From him

we learn that, of each two parts of the castanet, one is male and one is female (*macho* and *hembra*), and if we hear castanets well played—a thing which never happens in this realm, where people always hold the castanets between the wrong fingers—the difference of sound can be well detected. The Spaniard can play any air on his castanets, but the most usual way is to play the rhythm with the castanets of the left hand (like the bass on the piano) and to modulate with the right hand. The



Egyptian Clappers

system of clappers is extremely ancient. The illustration shows a pair of ivory hands which accompanied an Egyptian dance long before our era. They are reproduced here from ivory clappers in the possession of the A. B. Edwards Museum, and through the courtesy of Professor Flinders Petrie.

The fan has always been an adjunct of the dance, and is found at all times and everywhere, from China to Spain. A charming work on the history of the fan has been written by

M. Uzanne, and gives many quaint and interesting details. M. Blondel's book on the same subject also teems with instructive notes. In England the fan plays no such poetic part, but late in the last century a graceful custom was to present a fan to each lady at a ball, on which the dances of the evening with their music were printed. The illustration shows a fan on which are reproduced 'Ten of the most favourite country dances and five cotillons with their proper figures.'

I should have liked to write about the masks and disguises so usual at balls, but space will not allow me to dwell on this matter. The illustration, a copy from an illuminated MS. of the 'Roman de la Rose,' will show that fancy balls, or rather the fashion of adopting fancy attire at balls, dates far back.

Of all fancy balls, the most noteworthy is that of the Paris Opéra. Before the new building was in existence these balls were held right through Carnival, but it was feared that in the new house the revels might lead to injury of the artistic decorations. Permission was only granted for four balls every year, and these are so much patronised that the average gross earnings amount to 8,000*l*. Two orchestras play on such occasions, one in the large hall and one in the *foyer*. Under Louis Philippe, Musard directed the music of the *bals de l'Opéra* ; he was quite a Parisian celebrity, and was called 'le Paganini de la danse et le Roi de la quadrille.' He caused great enthusiasm, and introduced innovations ; for example, at a given moment all the chairs of the orchestra would be broken in rhythm, or a gun suddenly fired off, &c. Strauss succeeded Musard as *chef d'orchestre*.

Most people labour under the impression that olden times were more fortunate than our own days in the superiority of one or other of the arts, especially in the excellence of artists and executants. With perfect consciousness of this tendency, so natural to us all, Sir Augustus Harris, upon my consulting him on the present condition of stage dancing, was bound to give it as his opinion that this branch of art has greatly retrograded during the latter end of the century. He thought dancing



A DANCE FAN

had reached its lowest ebb, and that the barn-dance of the modern ballroom is a true gauge of the taste of our contemporaries in dancing. This low standard prevails not only in



La Danse dans le Jardin du Plaisir
(*From a manuscript 'Le Roman de la Rose' in the British Museum*)

England, but all over Europe. Artistic stage dancing has become a thing of the past, even in Italy, where the genuine dancing-school is extinct.

The reason why there is so little good dancing is because performers do not cultivate their brains. They care nothing about the expression of an idea, and the conventionality of their performance is mirrored in their expressionless faces. The usual short ballet skirts are odious. In Italy they are now made to stand straight out from the waist, and only just reach to the thigh. Flowing drapery should be an adjunct to graceful movements and skilful steps. But the moderns grasp the letter and not the spirit of this law in their skirt-dancing. What is the skirt-dance? No dance at all; a very monotonous and wearying performance, consisting in the twirling of many yards of some material in the manner of a mill-wheel. There are many styles of dancing existing in the world: stage-dancing, classic dancing, national dancing, and so on, falling into two great divisions, good dancing and bad dancing—mostly the latter.

I asked Sir Augustus if nothing could be done to remedy the evil. He could only suggest that a genius was required. Miss Kate Vaughan made the nearest approach to elevating the standard of modern stage-dancing.

Efforts are being made to-day towards a revival of the ballet, which forms such a large element in the entertainment at music halls. Thousands of pounds are spent on these shows, whole battalions of girls are enrolled and are made to pass before the public in kaleidoscopic way under limelight flashes and with everything that can enhance the scenic effect. These ballets, however, are pageants, and have very little in them of the dance in its more artistic form.



THE BALLET



An Artistic Group

CHAPTER XIII

THE PRACTICAL USE OF DANCING

FROM NOTES BY MRS. WORDSWORTH

To see in the practice of dancing nothing but a caprice of a stage-struck young person a means of entering upon a theatrical career—is, with all respect to the dramatic art, only another phase of the almost universal misunderstanding which has existed for many years on the subject of the dance. Hence its neglect, or toleration as a mere vehicle for social success. The study of music and painting is now general, it is an artistic enjoyment ; for young minds perceive and love

forms of beauty when their ear and eye are trained to seek them. The dance also trains the ear to measure lovely sounds, and the eye to appreciate graceful movements.

Thus, while pleading for the dance that it should be learnt for its own sake, and not for society's sake, Mrs. Wordsworth suggests a secondary motive, that of usefulness, in the earnest cultivation of the art so long despised.



Graceful Movements, No. 1

Healthy exercise is now so universally acknowledged as essential that it would be waste of time to dwell upon the theme. Now, the beautiful activity of artistic dancing gives play to the muscles while regulating and controlling their use; exercises the limbs under disciplinary supervision, rendering them more and more fit for their daily and commonplace tasks; rests the back and eyes after hours of study; and, above all, gives free employment to the lungs.

There are, however, special gifts which enable the art to serve equally the clever and the dull among students. It will brighten the mind of the backward child, enabling it to succeed, perhaps for the first time, in the accomplishment of a

task, and to gain more or less praise; and such a pupil will be encouraged by finding himself for once equal to school-fellows who outshine him in other classes. By degrees he will gain confidence which will be of value in the accomplishment of other tasks. Energy of body will also have its share in awakening energy of the mind. Dancing, correctly and intelligently taught, will have succeeded, where other means have failed, in leading a child of this description out of the dark age and heavy sense of depression and failure, the consciousness of the superiority of its companions.



Graceful Movements, No. 2

A moral gain is also attainable for many by this study Experienced teachers have seen instances of improvement effected in nerve and temper, undiscoverable until the stern discipline of the dancing lesson came to the rescue, working subtly in the guise of play - for one must remember that vigorous movement is natural to the young. The disobedient become accustomed to obey; the sulky perforce throw off their habitual mood; ill-temper is forgotten. Thus the physical benefit of the exercise is supplemented by other elevating influences.

Those who grieve (and who does not?) over the colourless lives of the deaf and dumb, will be consoled by the assurance of Mrs. Wordsworth that dancing is an untold pleasure to them. It may seem strange, but is nevertheless true, that the rhythmical movement causes them such real delight that in watching their dance one loses sight of their affliction, and can hardly realise that their ears are not drinking in every sound.

The gift of health is, as a general rule, one of the rewards of the dancer, and it is asserted by enthusiasts that dancing and kindred exercises do much to preserve the appearance of youth. Compare two women of fifty, one of whom has been trained to exercise the limbs and has continued to enjoy the activity of the dance, while the other has given way to languor, or has otherwise allowed her muscles to rest. There will be no difficulty in discovering in the younger-looking and more graceful woman the lover of the dance.

But before so much of actual benefit may be looked for, a good, regular, and systematic training in this art is necessary as a practical part of education. A little instruction by fits and starts will not suffice. For children, it is enough that they should look upon dancing as an art, if they have imagination enough ; as a pleasant lesson, if they like ; or as a recreation. There is little fear but that they will find it an exhilarating one.

Girls and boys must be taught to use, and not to abuse, their talent ; when they have their feet, and indeed the whole of their body, well under control, they will know better also how to appreciate artistic dancing whenever they see it. With the spread of good taste in society and among the masses, stage-dancing will become more refined.

It would require many pages to explain the special use of insight into the varieties of the dance. In the first place there must be taken into consideration the dress and music of the different periods. The beauty of the moving groups of Greek dancers consisted in the perfect harmony of their movements

of arms, hands, body, and feet; for the flowing robes then worn precluded acrobatic feats, and the music was not striking enough to distract attention from the dance. The postures of these classic times were the perfection of grace, and prove the earnest training that must have been imposed upon Greek youths and maidens, and still more the mastery of their art by the professors, who were often poets and dramatists. The Spanish art forms another important branch, and the playing of the castanets should be understood. The minuet



Cretan Garland Dance

period will fascinate students and make them realise that it is almost unpardonable in a man to fail in his bow or a woman to stumble in her curtsey. The music, too, was so gracious and so sweet that the dance became an act of homage. The spectators would have felt it disrespectful to chatter or to turn their backs while the dancers moved in such solemn pomp before them. How startling to turn from this epoch to the era of short skirts and acrobatic wonders!

From this point dancing as a spectacle became endurable

only to the uneducated. But there appear to be signs of a revival of classic grace in our present day, and it rests with the teachers to guide taste into sure paths. By studying all ages and types, and sifting the chaff from the wheat, a new golden age of dancing may open out for England, when instead of comparing a dancer to a Greek statue, one may see in the perfect pose and movement a new type of English beauty.



Greek Chain Dance

CHAPTER XIV

TIME AND RHYTHM OF THE DANCE

By Miss Middleton

The earliest artistic feelings of man are called forth by rhythmical effects ; but it is an open question whether these first took shape in sound or motion, in music or the dance.

It has been said that appreciation of these effects is cultivated by some Eastern peoples as an object in itself. With them the note and step, and their grouping, are often but unconsidered vehicles of expression for rhythm so marvellously developed that it remains unappreciated by other hearers. The subtle divisions and subdivisions convey to the Eastern intelligence a delight which the European would think more suitable as a study for the arithmetician than for the artist.

It is true, according to Captain Day, that the nautch is danced to measures made purposely as complicated as possible; but this elaboration is intended to help the dancer in conveying her meaning. An extraordinary development of rhythm may serve, in the East, to take the place of European counterpoint in the procession or clothing of a melody ; but by the majority of Western listeners it is unheeded or despised, just as the minute intervals of an Eastern air, made possible by the extreme length of the strings of the instrument, have, for all but the few students who are at once skilled and unprejudiced, the effect of a tiresome whine. Besides, it seems that Europeans, however high in office, are not, as a rule, privileged to hear the best Indian music, even on grand occasions.

The Eastern developments praised by travellers remain, therefore, even with the help of Captain Day's description of the

'Murchanas,' too obscure and mysterious for further comment in this chapter.

It may be said that dance rhythm in its origin included verse or song rhythm. The evidence of collected national songs shows that rhythmical effects among primitive peoples have been allied or subordinated to expression in warlike or other emotional dance and song.

It seems likely at any rate that primitive man, chanting and dancing, accommodated his song to his step. The sort of step, were it skip, jump, or shuffle, single or combined, shall here be said to mark time ; the figure of the dance—that is to say, the group of steps—to mark the rhythm. Rhythm, then, may be accounted for by the instinct of the dancer to swerve from one side to the other. As has been pointed out very ingeniously by Mr. Rowbotham in his 'History of Music,' the popularity of triple time in dancing may result from the natural tendency to skip for joy or from high spirits. In this movement we have a heavy beat of one foot followed by a light beat of the other, otherwise expressed by a long note followed by a short note — the trochee :

Example 1



In the shuffle the stamp made by the ball of the foot is followed by the slide of the sole, forming one short beat followed by a long beat—the iambus :

Example 2



And with each combination of these steps a new development of the measure arises.

So far, only the steps or notes of a motive have been considered. But after the dancer has skipped, tripped, or shuffled forward 'for some distance in any given direction, he

pauses, and skips away to the other, he goes backwards and forwards, now to one side, now to another, the fact being that, since the weight of the body rests on the foot which leads the skip, he is obliged to make these frequent changes in order to ease it, wherefore he keeps up an alternation of right foot leading, left foot leading, and proceeds in set skips without knowing that he does so.' The set of skips marks the rhythm

At the end of each set or phrase there would be originally a step lost; for, except by missing a step, there could be no such natural or easy change of the leading foot; if this change be not marked off by a pause (apparent also in the accompanying song) it declares itself by the strong emphasis of the first beat of the new set. There is a battle dance of the Australians which seems to denote a series of shuffles to the right for four bars, followed by four bars of almost regular movement, a kick, or jump, or march forward, ending with a repetition of the shuffle, led this time by the left foot, and bringing the dancer back to the starting point, or forward to the left hand:

Example 3



It has been worth while to consider these simple elements of rhythm, because civilised Europe has never discarded the natural duple and triple time-beats, using them with diversities of accent and figure in the music. It seems unlikely that a complicated or unnatural beat in dancing would survive in artificial society. The 5–4 beat existed among ancient races as distinct as the Finns, Negroes, and Indians, who added also

the 7-4 and 9-4 in a bar. The following dance tune is given by Ambros ; it may be regarded as a 5-4 bar, or as a 5 bar period. He attributes it to the Negroes of the Soudan :

Example 4



Rhythm, or the grouping of bars and the balancing of periods, has been seriously cultivated in dance music. It took shape very gradually from the time when primitive man moved in the swing of one phrase in two bars, repeated *ad infinitum*, to the epoch of the nicely calculated and rounded series of groups of rhythms called a Viennese waltz.

The following strophe out of the seven choruses of the dervish Mevlevi, published by the 'Harmonicon' in 1823, begins softly and mildly, but has forcible rhythmical periods of three bars, with a repetition of a cadence before the double bar :

Example 5



'They dance,' says Professor Ramsay, 'in frenzied excitement to the music of Cybele's own instruments, cymbals and flutes, and perhaps even to the actual airs that were played centuries before Christ.'

If early Greek tunes appear to moderns somewhat ineffective, owing to the subservience of musical rhythm to metre, the later Greek dances seem disguised to the ear of a native Greek when they are harmonised. An instance is quoted by Engel, where a Greek vehemently protested against the use of the simple chords by which a German musician supported the following air :

Example 6



In the absence of documentary evidence earlier than the ninth century, it may be safely assumed that popular music during the early days of the Christian era generally followed the dance rhythms, while church music became systematised by Pope Gregory.

Popular dance tunes became more and more definitely rhythmical as they were spread abroad by troubadours, gipsies, and jongleurs. So definite did they become that Franco, a monk of Cologne in the middle ages, drew up in a treatise a system of time notation. Henceforward these measures began to work their way into the services of the Church. This was the first victory of the dance rhythm.

The troubadours must be passed over with bare recognition, to give way to the most enduring of the world's singers, the gipsies. Two dance tunes which come from Russia have a comparatively uncommon rhythm of four phrases, each of three bars :

Example 7



An example from France, dating from the sixteenth century, appears to be of unusually ascetic character; the gipsy *abandon* depends only on its execution. It is quoted by Miss L. A. Smith in her book upon Romany music:

Example 8



It is, however, wilder than the air noted down by Salinas, before 1557, as the usual movement for historical songs and ballads:

Example 9



But gipsy tunes are generally distinguished by great vigour and wealth of imagination. One belonging to early English gipsies befits the country's reputation for merriment. It has a period of eight bars, another of four bars, with a close of four bars, repeated, and begins :

Example 10



This leads fittingly to the English dances ; the Morris dance especially, which is said to have been inspired by the gipsies. It may be supposed that both dance and music were here subordinated in interest to the mummeries they accompanied. The Example 11 is from Chappell's ' Popular Music,' 2nd edition, in 6–4 time, and has no irregularity of rhythm. Like other English dances, it may be performed to any ordinary air. It is composed of three divisions, which may point to a variation in the step or to three changes of figure :

Example 11



Among dances of the English people none was more popular than ' Joan Sanderson,' or the cushion dance. Its slow opening in triple time was followed by phrases in 6–4 time ; and though departing from the usual simplicity, did not test too severely the ears of village dancers. The tune of the cushion dance is quoted by Stainer, Grove, and Chappell.

The measure of the hornpipe is so varied that no definite rule can be laid down, but it is safe to say that the final note of a phrase, whether it be in common or in triple time, should be long and accented, suggesting the stamp of the foot. A very lengthy and elaborate 'Hornepype' was composed early in the sixteenth century by Aston, of whose other music only sacred pieces are extant. The example is taken from Chappell's 'Popular Music':—

Example 12



A fine one by Dibdin, 'Jack at Greenwich,' like the celebrated 'College Hornpipe,' is in common time.

The jig has a fine swing in a phrase of two bars in triple time. The following, by Eccles, was composed about the end of the seventeenth century, and is quoted by Stainer and Barrett ('Dict. of Musical Terms'). The Irish jig is something similar.

Example 13



It is interesting to note that, of all old English dances, the only one which has survived to this day is 'Sir Roger de Coverley.' The music was printed, with directions for the dance, in 1685. The following version is taken from a volume of Playford's 'Dancing Master' for 1695 :

Example 14



English composers eagerly adopted foreign dance forms. Whitelocke, a politician of the seventeenth century, wrote a coranto which enjoyed extraordinary popularity. Pavans and almans exercised the ingenuity of musicians, and they did not seek to improve on the fresh and sturdy British tunes. The allemande, coranto, saraband, and gigue became the accepted material of the lesson or suite. For Europe had now discovered a new art, that of instrumental music. Madrigal music, 'apt for voices and violls,' had been performed by instruments only; and then dance tunes were played without reference to dancing. When a galliard followed a pavan for the sake of contrast in rhythm, the suite became inevitable.

The Italian school, with its mastery of the violin, smoothed the marked rhythms into *cantabile* effects, while the harpsichord demanded the unmodified beats of the dance.

Herein may be celebrated another triumph for dance music, if attention to one or another detail of art is to be commended. This phase certainly served the purpose of assisting composers and instrumentalists to technical perfection. Of even more importance, though more gradual, was the influence of dance music upon the sonata form, and afterwards on the symphony.

At first the sonata owed its birth to the madrigal, but in the course of development it discarded the contrapuntal character in three out of its four movements, and substituted dance forms.

Ultimately the order of rhythmic motions which constituted any certain dance was made to give way to a fusion of the rhythmic elements. Only the minuet and trio were retained in their proper forms—until the scherzo supplanted them ; and the rondo appeared as the last movement.

In the meantime the dance had invaded the stage. Perhaps a beginning had been made when Beaujoyeulx produced, and dedicated to Henri III. of France, a ballet in which he had blended together poetry, music, and dancing, giving to dancing the first place. His music was judged by Burney to be very poor, and little was thought about the music of ballets until Lulli transformed the French opera into a collection of dance measures. One of his minuets is appended ; it is quoted by F. L. Schubert in his 'Tanzmusik' as the oldest known example of the measure (1663):

Example 15



The mania lasted in Paris for fully a century, and was combated by Gluck on behalf of true dramatic art. An indication of the same mania was experienced in England in 1727, when the 'Beggar's Opera' first saw the light. It was a mere collection of broadly marked ballad and dance tunes, without

dramatic or musical relevance; but it struck a blow at the formal classic opera, and demonstrated the English love of vigorous and striking measures, simple or compound.

In the meantime the Poles had developed their naturally graceful people's dances, of which Engel gives an example—

Example 16



and had evolved the polonaise and the mazurka. The former is in triple time ; it includes a trio often in the minor and four repeats, each of eight or more bars. The accompaniment should be marked by the figure :

Example 17



Many accented notes and the closing one fall upon the weak beat of the bar :—

Example 18



Chopin has treated the mazurka, as well as the polonaise, with a wealth of imagination all his own, breathing into the courtly dance such poignant melancholy that all the Paris of his day suffered from depression of spirits. Ehlert says of the mazurkas : ' In these pieces the deepest heart-sorrow draws

on little red-laced boots, and says, "O my weary feet! you must trip it in dainty shoes, you who would gladly lie deep in your grave!"'

In the same way Schumann idealised the waltz and other German dance rhythms. And presently there came the Renaissance of dance music in Germany, with the compositions of Lanner, the elder Strauss, and other Austrians. Their art of instrumentation, and their knowledge of form, invested the waltz with a charm that the mere dance lacks when performed to a succession of tonic, dominant, and sub-dominant chords, with a weak tune on the top, heard one season, and never asked for again. These Viennese composers were earnest enough to read the tendencies of the time; they translated the sensuous and restless moods of the age into artistically perfect musical pictures, inspiring the excitement of pleasure. Ambros fixes 1835 as the height of the waltz period.

An example follows of a Bavarian dance of the beginning of the century. The fresh and graceful Zwiefache, or series of odd and even dances, have sudden changes of time, and were said to be very fascinating to clever dancers.

Example 19



They present difficulties akin to those of 5–4 movements, and others more or less irregular. In their light may fade away Tartini's eighteenth-century prejudice against music composed of five equal notes in a bar, of which he said 'no musician had yet been able to play it.' The most conspicuous instance of success in composition and execution of this 5–4 time occurs in the second movement of Tschaïkowski's Pathetic Symphony.

When Italian opera escaped from the influence of French ballet composers, it became a hybrid music, still jerky in measure and unconnected with the words and actions of the piece. The melodies had no root in genuine people's music, and were treated in a highly artificial manner by genius gone astray. One test of the popularity of such operatic airs lay in their suitability for arrangement in quadrilles. So-called sacred pieces shared the same fate, and one famous composition of the kind reached its proper sphere when arranged as a society dance; but this marked the low-water level of sacred music.

The fact that the dance was thus supplied with tunes from other branches of musical art may have been a sign of exhaustion in the art of dance music, as well as frivolity and cheap sentiment in the Italian opera of that period.

But in the meantime a new blossom of art opened side by side with the dead leaves. Great masters turned from the insipidities of convention to the well of music undefiled, namely, national music. Haydn seized upon this raw material of scale and rhythm, and raised it by his happy genius into forms of haunting beauty in his symphonies. Partly from carelessness, partly from true instinct, he let many of these airs stand almost unaltered. Wagner was too severe in complaining that Haydn idealised too little, and left the popular dance tunes to strike an impression of narrowness, local colour, even vulgarity. Haydn left the creator's task to Beethoven, who brought to perfection the treatment of folk dances, and sealed with his genius the inspiration of simple people.

Fired by so great an example, modern composers bring their highly-wrought musicianship to bear on simple and pure themes. A noble rivalry for their most ideal and therefore truest presentation exists between writers such as Brahms, Dvořák, Smetana, Villiers Stanford, in quartet, symphony, and other forms.

A suggestion of poetical significance has been thrown out by Dr. Parry, whose views on the origin of instrumental music

have been already quoted in this chapter. 'Isolated passages may be justly interpreted as representing gestures of an ideal dance kind, like that of the ancients,' and in another place : 'It may be pointed out that a considerable quantity of the expressive material of music is manifestly representative of, or corresponding to, expressive gestures. The branch of dancing which consisted of such expressive gestures was one of the greatest importance, but it has almost entirely ceased to hold place among modern civilised nations. In music the traces of it are still to be met with, both in the finest examples of sarabandes, and also, more subtly, in some of the most expressive passages of the greatest masters.'

The books and references to dance music used in this chapter include—

Day, 'The Music of Southern India,' &c. 1891.
Rowbotham, 'History of Music' (*Bentley*), 1885, 1893.
Ambros, 'Geschichte der Musik.' Breslau, 1862.
Chorley, 'National Music of the World' (*Sampson Low & Co.*), 1880.
'The Harmonicon,' 1823.
Engel, 'Introduction to the Study of National Music,' 1866.
Smith, 'Through Romany Songland' (*David Stott*), 1889.
Burney, 'History of Music.'
Chappell [Woolridge], 'Popular Music of the Olden Time' (*Chappell & Co.*)
Stainer and Barrett, 'Dictionary of Musical Terms' (*Novello & Co.*)
Playford, 'The Dancing Master,' 1652, and later editions.
Schubert, F. L., 'Die Tanzmusik.'
Ungewitter, 'Die Tanzmusik.'
Grove's 'Dictionary,' with valuable articles by Dr. Parry, Mr. Barclay Squire, Mr. Corder, and others, on this subject (*Macmillan*).

CHAPTER XV

A RETROSPECT

By the Honourable Mrs. Armytage

Dancing as it was practised in 1845 differs greatly from dancing as it is carried on in 1895 in the ballrooms of London society, Some few of those who now look on at the entertainments and amusements of this generation from the vantage post of the chaperon's bench can recall their own experience of the earlier period of Queen Victoria's reign. The balls at Almack's certainly made and ruled the fashion in dances from the date of their first existence in 1765 until their final extinction about the year 1840–1. These assemblies were held at the rooms in King Street, St. James's, known at the present time as Willis's Rooms, which, however, took their first name from the original proprietor, Mr. Almack. The opening of these rooms is alluded to by Horace Walpole and also by Guy Williams, another gossiping letter-writer of that time. The former writes on February 14, 1765, to Lord Hertford, that the rooms were open in such an unseasoned state that the ceilings were dripping wet, but the Duke of Cumberland was among the company. Williams wrote to Selwyn that there were three elegant, new-built rooms, and that for a ten-guinea subscription you may enjoy a ball and a supper once a week for twelve weeks; and in writing again he pictures 'Almack's Scotch face in a bag wig. Waiting at supper would divert you as would his Lady in a sack making Tea and curtesying to the Duchesses.'

The lady patronesses of this social institution were absolute

in their rule, and an admission or refusal to the sacred portals stamped a novice's position at once. In 1814 the famous Lady Jersey was at the head of the Council, and the balls at Almack's were the *ne plus ultra* of fashionable entertainments. In those days a voucher for Almack's, only obtained from one of the six lady patronesses, was the aim and object of all who wished to shine in the mystic circle of the ultra-fashionable clique of London society; and an introduction to one of these great ladies was a matter of most anxious importance. The very stringent code of rules which guarded these gatherings from the intrusion of anyone outside the privileged circle was drawn up by Lady Jersey and her co-patronesses, and an admission was fraught with great difficulties. Each lady could only give a certain number of vouchers, and only the quintessence of aristocracy were present, while it was said three-fourths of the nobility knocked in vain at the portals of Almack's. Colonel Gronow states that, though there were three hundred Guardsmen going about town, not more than half a dozen ever succeeded in obtaining a voucher. Lady Jersey is described as a theatrical tragedy queen, presiding over these reunions, 'into whose sanctum sons of commerce never intrude.' A stern rule also forbade the admittance of anyone after midnight had struck, and when the Duke of Wellington appeared at the door a few minutes after the prescribed hour he was refused admittance.

These two facts speak for themselves of the different state of things in reference to balls then and now. The idea of refusing admittance at such a comparatively early hour will strike the present generation as quaint. In addition to Lady Jersey, the leaders of fashion who supported her included Ladies Sefton, Cowper, Castlereagh, Princess Esterhazy, Countess Lieven, and the late Lady Willoughby De Eresby; and they met in solemn conclave to consider the petitions for admission. In 1815 the *contredanse*, Scotch reels and jigs (said to have been introduced into London by Jane, Duchess of Gordon, when in the zenith of her youth and beauty she came down from Scotland after her marriage), were the esta-

blished dances then in fashion ; but in that year Lady Jersey ventured to introduce the quadrille from France, where it was so popular, and its reception at Almack's put the *cachet* of approval upon the new dance. The first night on which it was danced, Lady Jersey, Lady Harriet Butler, Lady Susan Ryder, and Miss Montgomery, with Count Aldegarde, Mr. Montgomery, Mr. Harley, and Mr. Montague for their partners, made up the first set that was ever seen in London. The



The First Quadrille at Almack's
(*Taken from 'Le Bon Genre' Prints, published at the end of the Eighteenth Century*)

figures were intricate ; the steps, positively essential to their correct interpretation, were manifold ; and it was quite as necessary to master the difficulties of *Pas de basque*, *Chassez-croisez*, with the regulation *Balancé* and *Poussette*, as it had been in the past century to grapple with the minute etiquette of the Menuet de la Cour or Gavotte ; nor was it till long after the writer's own *début* that the lazy, nonchalant fashion of walking through the figures was at all tolerated. Queen

Victoria and the Prince Consort, with Prince George (now Duke of Cambridge) and his sister Princess Augusta, Duchess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, were particularly graceful dancers ; but few people will now believe that, as the ladies started to dance 'L'Eté' figure of the quadrille, it was absolutely necessary to hold out their skirts, with hands placed in the exact position taught by the dancing-master of the time, point the toe and *chassé* across from side to side, each figure in its turn being danced with the same careful attention to regulation steps ; all of which required far more room than can usually be found in most London ballrooms at the present time.

Having now established a new dance from across the Channel, we next hear of the 'mazy waltz' coming in from Vienna, and find that as early as 1816 it was danced at Almack's by a few very bold spirits ; among these were mentioned, as being very expert, the names of Lord Palmerston and Madame de Lieven, Princess Esterhazy and Baron de Neumann, who were constantly dancing together. One or two old prints represent these leaders of fashion starting to waltz in Willis's Rooms. By degrees these assemblies became gradually less fashionable and less popular, Society was content to meet at friends' houses, the number of ball-giving hostesses increased so rapidly that subscription balls were no longer patronised, and thus, after an existence of ninety years, Almack's died away. A late attempt to resuscitate similar gatherings was a distinct failure ; still, for many years the fine suite of rooms was in requisition for some special entertainment got up for charity, which was often patronised and attended by royalty. When one recalls the rank and beauty of English society that from time to time have met within the walls of Willis's Rooms, the spot may be called almost historical. The famous Caledonian Ball was always held here up to the last ten years, but this annual 'gathering of the clans' was at length transferred to the New Club, Covent Garden, and more recently to the Whitehall Room, Hotel Métropole.

The waltz, when first introduced in London, was a slow

movement in *trois temps*, and very different from that which we recognise in this latter part of the century.

The first appearance of the polka in 1844 created no little excitement, and some of the newspapers of the day, in alluding to it, said that 'its introduction into fashionable society may be regarded as the commencement of a new style in the art of dancing. Russia and Bohemia are said to be responsible for its origin. The style of dancing the polka varies considerably, as the most graceful persons dance it in a quiet easy manner, but the movement of this elegant and fashionable dance still continues, and will most likely increase in time.'[1] Directions for dancing it describe it as three steps and a rest, which would hardly insure anyone's mastering its intricacies. At a fancy ball the original dancers appeared in costumes which were picturesque, but perhaps rather startling to the ideas of 1844. Short skirts of scarlet cloth edged with white fur were worn by the ladies under Polish jackets, and showed high scarlet boots with clattering heels, while coquettish little caps completed their dress, the whole eliciting much comment at the time; but the polka was accepted, and has held its popularity up to now, though danced at its advent in a very different style, the step being elaborate, while such music as the Annen Polka, by Strauss, inspired the dancers.

Who changes the order of things in dancing is quite as great a mystery as who is the priestess that presides over the creation of new fancies and fashions in dress, and demands the sacrifice at her shrine of so many fond ideas of what was once the ideal in dress or custom; but steadily and surely the alterations creep in, by slow degrees the old *trois-temps* waltz died out, and the *deux temps* usurped its place and reigned in triumph, until pushed aside again by that which has since been adopted.

While these gradual changes in round dances went on, another new dance sprang into life during the season of 1850.

[1] The dance is treated in its proper place, and it will be perceived that the writer quoted was incorrect in attributing responsibility for its origin to Russia.

Madame Sacré, the fashionable dancing-mistress of that time, held her classes for instruction in the Hanover Square Rooms, and as her elder pupils made their appearances in London society she often persuaded them to look in occasionally, while the younger generation were under her instruction, and to join in some of the fanciful or novel dances which she delighted to teach; thus the lancers was first thought of and suggested as a welcome addition to the ball programme. Four young ladies who were popular in London set to work in earnest to learn and to practise the very elaborate figures, while they also induced the necessary number of young men to join them. How one smiles to think of such energy, and to picture the young men of to-day taking such trouble over a dance! Impossible; but it was not so in 1850, when Lady Georgina Lygon, Lady Jane Fielding, Mdlle. Olga de Lechner (daughter of Baroness Brunnow, our Russian Ambassadress in England), and Miss Berkeley danced the first set of the lancers in a London ball-room. It was danced at the Turkish Embassy, at Bath House, at Lady Caroline Townley's, and many other balls during that season by the four couples who knew it, whilst others looked on. The lancers was then considered particularly pretty and graceful, and was very different from the lively friskiness of the *fin de siècle* dance as we know it; there was indeed a certain stately grace about it which is entirely lost. Steps and figures were most carefully gone through; it soon became most popular, but, as the number of those who attempted it increased, the rigid observance of the original figures was soon dispensed with, and the alterations have certainly changed its whole style. It is amusing to read over the published directions given in 1850, in a fashionable newspaper, as to the 'etiquette of dancing the lancers.'

'This elegant dance, denominated as "Hart's set," when well executed, is one in which the dancer can display his skill to great advantage,' the critic says. 'It consists of four couples arranged *vis-à-vis*, and the figures were thus danced:—1st figure, "La Chaîne." The leading lady and opposite gentleman



QUEEN CHARLOTTE'S BIRTH-NIGHT BALL AT ST. JAMES'S

(From an Engraving after D[illegible])

advance and retire, re-advance, turn with both hands and retire; the leading couple pass between the opposite couple and return outside to their places; all four couples set to corners; repeat four times.' Then come directions for the other figures—'Zodorska,' 'D'Orset,' 'L'Etoile,' and 'Finale les Lancers.' Though thoroughly established in popularity, and regularly danced for some years at private houses, it was quite ten years before the lancers was included in the programme at Her Majesty's State balls, where now it is never omitted; but one doubts if the original arrangers of this dance would recognise some of the figures as performed with the lively additions of modern hilarity, or would quite appreciate the change.

The orchestras of years gone by were led by Weippart, Jullien and Koenig, Labitzky, Coote and Tinney; whilst a Strauss was then, as now, considered the master of the art of composing waltzes and polkas, as well as of leading the orchestra for dancing. 'Strauss's band' is still with us, and yet, at the time of the Queen's coronation in 1837, we know that his band was engaged to play at Almack's, and that the waltz music of this talented artist created a perfect *furore*. The elder Strauss must have long ceased to wield the bâton, but the prophet's mantle surely fell on his successor, for the Strauss of to-day is in no way inferior to him who ruled the orchestra in 1839.

While recalling the balls and dances of other times, one contrasts the arrangements of the royal entertainments at Buckingham Palace with those given by Her Majesty soon after her accession, in what was then the new royal residence. Prior to that time Court balls, as well as Drawing Rooms and Levées, were held at St. James' Palace, but the *entrée* to these receptions was strictly limited to the Court circle and the most important and illustrious members of the aristocracy. Very quaint old records and pictures of some of these entertainments are still extant. The reception rooms at Buckingham Palace have been greatly enlarged by the addition of the magnificent ballroom and corridors, an alteration quite essential

for the increased and increasing number of guests who are now honoured with a royal invitation. In 1838, and until the extension of the palace in 1853 was completed and the new rooms opened, two of the State apartments were set apart for dancing ; a band was stationed in each room so that the dancers were divided ; and the fine picture gallery separated the ball-rooms. Weippart and Strauss, Jullien and Coote, were among those who played in the palace. Her Majesty and her Court entered the ballroom before ten o'clock, when, choosing a partner, the Queen opened the ball with the first quadrille, and also joined in other dances ; later in the evening a move was made to the second ballroom, where Her Majesty finished the ball by leading off a country dance, sometimes as late as three o'clock. The names of Lord Uxbridge and Lord Torrington appear among some of the Court circle who had the honour of being the Queen's partners in the old English dance. Quadrilles and waltzes, with an occasional galop, were danced throughout the evening, until after Her Majesty's marriage in 1840, when the polka appears to have been introduced, and the concluding country dance was omitted. In 1849 a Scotch reel was danced before the Queen, with the bagpipes in attendance, Lord Breadalbane, Lord Douglas, Cluny Macpherson, Dr. Dundas, Lady Charlotte Eliot, Lady Rachel Russell, Miss Kerr, and Miss Baillie forming the set, and the gentlemen who took part in it were nearly always those who attended Court in full Highland dress. Reels continued for some years to be danced at the old palace by those who by virtue of their Scotch blood could really do them justice. A distinctive feature in the Court balls of years gone by was that once or twice during the evening a pause was made in the dancing, and the guests passed by the Queen, as Her Majesty sat on the daïs in the Throne Room. Independently of the fact that our Sovereign has been unable for many years to appear at the balls, never having been present since the days of her sad widowhood, the enormous increase in the number of invited guests would make this impossible.

Reference to some old records reveals the fact that a so-called cotillon was known in the reign of George IV. A public breakfast was given by the Prince Regent at Carlton House, when 600 guests were present. Nine marquees were erected, and various amusements provided; four bands played during the afternoon; comic entertainments were performed by the best actors of the day, and after refreshment the company danced on a beautiful lawn, his Royal Highness the Prince leading out Lady Waldegrave, and 'all frequently changed partners and grouped into cotillons, all being over by six o'clock.' This is certainly not a cotillon as now understood, though the change of partners tells of some sort of similarity. A good cotillon is often considered a very popular and excellent wind-up dance at a ball. Perhaps one of the most noticeable cotillons ever danced was at the famous ball given by the Brigade of Guards to the Prince and Princess of Wales on June 26, 1863, a ball scarcely ever equalled in magnificence. The second great International Exhibition was over, and the vast building standing empty in Cromwell Road was secured for the entertainment. The decorations and general arrangements were carried out by the committee of officers chosen for the purpose, and with a most brilliantly successful result. The immense galleries were transformed into a series of magnificent reception rooms, one of the largest was devoted to dancing, and on this occasion Mr. Godfrey, the well-known bandmaster, composed his most popular waltz, 'The Guards' Waltz,' which was the delight of ball-goers for some years. Notwithstanding the size of the ballroom, it was densely crowded till a very late (or early) hour, and a cotillon begun after two o'clock had not finished till the clock had struck five. The numbers who had stayed to join it may be estimated by the fact that chairs all round this enormous room were required to seat the dancers. Like everything else, the cotillon of thirty years ago was very different from that which is now given, where entertaining is on a lavish and extravagant scale. The figures were simple, they could be danced without all the accessories now considered

essential, and flowers were almost the only necessary addition. Now all sorts of fanciful figures are introduced from Paris, and on some occasions very expensive presents are provided.

With the immense increase of society and the crowds which fill most London houses, dancing has certainly undergone great changes; it would be quite impossible to dance quadrilles or lancers as was once imperative in good society, and they are now walked through in lazy fashion, even at Court balls. Waltzing still holds its own; it is quite as popular as when first introduced at Almack's, and it is always a pleasure to watch those who excel in the art when, to the fascinating music written by the best composers, the well-matched couple float by with all the poetry of motion.

One can hardly write of dancing as it was without a few words on what must always be one of the accessories of a dance, now frequently considered as the first necessity—a good supper! Thirty and forty years ago, the mysterious invitation to a 'Thé Dansant' informed the invited guests that only light refreshments would be provided, and it also suggested that the music would not comprise an orchestral band, but the more modest piano and cornet; still, the invitations were accepted, and those who went to dances for dancing's sake were satisfied, which would hardly be the case now that such elaborate suppers are considered the crucial test of a good or a bad ball. Whether the art of dancing has deteriorated or the enjoyment of dances has decreased is an open question, and beyond the province of one who only recalls the past and contrasts it with the present, having shared the past and being still an interested spectator.

CHAPTER XVI

BALLS : HOSTESSES AND GUESTS

BY THE COUNTESS OF ANCASTER

THERE can be no question that the balls now given in London far excel those of former days in many important particulars. Modern taste and appliances enable hostesses to make a far more picturesque display than was formerly possible. Every detail is considered, and the most is made of the house to conduce to the pleasure and enjoyment of the guests. The use of flowers in the adornment of ballrooms, especially of the beautiful palms which are to be had at a very moderate expense, is quite a modern feature, and a very charming one. Though no light can compare with myriads of wax candles when well protected and well diffused throughout the ballroom, still the electric light of these days has added greatly to the brilliancy and effect, particularly of large halls. Again, the instrumental bands which supply the very best music simply vie with one another in the excellence of their performance, and far surpass anything known earlier in the century. Another very important detail contributing to the success of a ball is the supper and wine ; and it is the rarest exception when both these are not of the very best, served at round tables in the greatest comfort, instead of there being a scramble for food at a buffet, as often happened in less luxurious days.

Balls given in country houses are quite as well done as in London. The 'stately homes of England' are perhaps even better adapted for the purposes of entertaining than London houses, excepting of course the great establishments, such as

Stafford House, Devonshire House, Montagu House, Grosvenor House, and a few others. The public balls in the county towns form a special part of our county social life, and vary so much that it would be impossible to speak of them as a whole; but when there are parties formed in country houses round about a populous centre, and the lady patronesses and the stewards take pains to make the gatherings a success, this they hardly ever fail to be, and they are looked forward to by the young people of the neighbourhood as the great event of the year. One of the best public balls is the Royal Caledonian Ball, which takes place annually in London for the benefit of Scottish charities. The Duke of Atholl has been treasurer now for many years, and with the assistance of the Lady Patronesses, who get up parties for a reel and fancy quadrille, it has become most popular. It is well done in every way, and the tickets are moderate in price. Vouchers are issued for this ball, a circumstance which recalls the days of Almack's. The Lady Patronesses were so very exclusive when Almack's was the vogue that many stories are told of the methods employed to obtain the longed-for tickets, and of the heart-burnings that arose from the refusal to grant them to one and their bestowal on another. Nothing of this kind happens now. 'Autres temps, autres mœurs.' It would be impossible in these days to go back to the small and select society of the past. Neither, happily, is it necessary to do so, as it would be an extraordinary thing now should any real breach of good manners or decorum occur. We live in an age when there is a general 'levelling up.' All are fairly well mannered, but there is less courtesy than there used to be. People are not sociable, they think too much of their own individual amusement, and for that reason there is a lack of spirit or 'go' at many modern dances.

In spite of all that goes to make balls so delightful, it is doubtful if they are enjoyed by the majority of those present as they used to be, or certainly as much as they might be. Balls may be considered from two points of view—from that of the entertainers and the entertained. It has been stated that

no pains are spared by modern hostesses. Never was there more hospitality shown than there is now; indeed the fault is that givers of balls are sometimes too lavish in their invitations, and thus sacrifice the pleasure and comfort of their guests by overcrowding their rooms. Their kind desire is to afford pleasure to a larger number; but it is distinctly a mistake to invite more guests than the rooms will hold. It prevents any dancing that can be called a pleasure; it changes the beauty of the scene to a heated, struggling crush. Dresses are torn, tempers are spoilt. There is a general look of boredom and disappointment where all ought to look bright and cheerful, and what with fewer people might have been a great success becomes a failure. One of the reasons why rooms are so often crowded is that the proportion of ladies and gentlemen is so unequal. It is supposed to be necessary to ask three or even four times as many men as ladies. The reason for inviting a large proportion of gentlemen is very much owing to the constant 'round' dances, so called, and the absence of 'squares.' *A propos* of this, a very great lady said one evening to a Royal Duchess—both ladies are dead, but they were well known to many still living—'Do you not think, madam, that the manners of the present day have very much deteriorated? The young men come forward, and, instead of asking for the honour of a dance, they say, "Have a square? Dance the next round?"' This offhand style is not perhaps so common as it was a few years back, still the deterioration of manners is very much animadverted upon by those who remember the past generation.

In considering the reason for this overcrowding of rooms, the solid phalanx of black coats to be seen drawn up across the ball-room or filling up the doors is partly the cause of it. This, of course, refers to the average-sized London house, as in the great London palaces the question of numbers hardly matters at all. If people crowd together, it is their own fault; but clearly, when a house is of ordinarily moderate size, the number of guests invited is of the greatest importance; and, though it

is necessary to issue a larger proportion of invitations to gentlemen than to ladies, this is overdone. Since quadrilles and lancers have been given up, so also has any regular introducing of partners. It is tiresome to the onlooker to see this phalanx of black coats, mostly composed of quite young men, who naturally know hardly anyone, and then to glance round the room where stand numbers of nice, bright, pretty girls, in front of their chaperons. It is not 'the thing' to introduce. Everyone allows that the introducing of people in society is a matter requiring tact and good judgment, and there are many different ways in which it should be done. But that the *débutants* and *débutantes* are to be left to a sort of fate or good luck till they get to know a few partners is a stupid and unnecessary custom which ought to be altered. It is well enough for the families who lead in London society, and who can entertain and so make acquaintances as they please ; but it makes it very uphill work for those who are not in this fortunate position, and is one of the causes of the dulness of balls and the lack of enjoyment.

At those balls where, besides the host and hostess, there are other members of the family who can introduce partners, make up sets for a quadrille or lancers (not that ugly romp called Margate or Kitchen Lancers, utterly unsuited to a London ballroom), see that those who wish it are taken to supper, and who perform other kind and gracious little acts of the sort, the affair is as cheery and pleasant again as at those melancholy reunions where it seems that everyone is only thinking of his or her own amusement.

Thus far, balls have been considered from the point of view of the 'entertainers,' and there is now the side of the 'entertained.' Though to make a ball agreeable there should be people of mature age as well as young, balls are mainly intended for the young people, and for the unmarried members of both sexes. Delightful as it is, and greatly as it enhances the smartness of a ball to see the married ladies taking their turn in the dance, still it is not the business of their lives.

Besides the dancing, it is, or ought to be, through the medium of balls that young people become acquainted easily and pleasantly, and, moreover, are introduced to friends of their parents. Balls, particularly in London, are as much wanted for this agreeable side of our social life as they are for the delightful pastime of dancing. It is for this reason that the complete extinction of square dances is so much to be regretted. If there is a quadrille played now, it is with the greatest difficulty that the set is made up. Perhaps eight or ten couples dance it. This makes the ballroom very dull, and quadrilles cannot be introduced with any chance of success unless the young people, more particularly the men, will take the trouble to learn the figures.

Probably square dances were abandoned a few years back because of the great crowd which prevented movement, and there was a disposition to stand instead of joining in the different figures. Unless, therefore, people will take the pains to acquire the knowledge of these very simple figures, so that they may easily, courteously, and pleasantly step through the measure, it would be of no advantage to society to dance them again. If at the Court balls and at the great houses in London it was an understood thing that four or five square dances would be given during the evening, and that it was the wish of the ball-givers that all should join in when possible, they would soon become popular again, and would assist enormously to break up the exclusiveness of the dancing of these days, making the guests feel they have occasionally to join in helping to make it all 'go.' Introductions would be more easily accomplished. Again, numbers of men and a certain number of girls are incapable of waltzing, and it is a great pity they attempt it. The men who do not dance round dances now keep away from balls altogether, or go to swell the black array of lookers-on, and very soon disappear. Those girls who are not good waltzers have little enjoyment, and soon get tired of balls. It would be impossible in writing about balls not to mention the modern custom of sitting-out, which has come into fashion entirely since there have been nothing but constant round dances. Up to a

certain point it is good and restful, but it is not very sociable. What would the courtly lords and ladies of old think of us if they saw the manners of these times? No sooner does the music of the waltz or polka come to a conclusion than the man makes a rush for the door, with his partner following behind as best she may, so that a seat may be gained in the balcony or on the most convenient chair in the drawing-room adjoining! The offering of an arm seems to have fallen entirely into disuse, and many of the pretty, though perhaps formal, courtesies of life are passing away. We can hardly be surprised when there is so much competition in all kinds of sport and athletics between ladies and gentlemen. By all means let the ladies enjoy to the full measure of their powers all healthy and health-giving exercise, but there never should be competition between the sexes. It is owing to this that the deference which used to be paid to the weaker by the stronger is no longer given, because no longer demanded. It may be that in some respects there is much now in general intercourse which is better than probably it ever was before; but in writing upon the balls and dancing of the present day it is necessary to review the past, and to compare it with the present time. There is no time and there can be no age when it will be possible to do without courtesy, or even without ceremony, and, therefore, the ladies should set the fashion, and the manliness and the chivalry of the present age will soon adopt the courtly bow, the courteous deferential ways, which many now living remember in their fathers and grandfathers.

Quiet, stately dancing is the only kind suited to such an occasion as a Court ball. The young generation care for nothing but the wildest waltz or polka. There are at every ball good dancers, but, on the other hand, how many who cannot *dance* at all! They can hop and jump and make a great display of physical force, but this is not consistent with good taste, and is certainly not dancing. A proper amount of genuine vigour is suitable to such lively dances as Scotch reels; but even in these the steps should be clearly defined and not merely

stamped out anyhow. The attempt to introduce theatrical effects into drawing-room dancing is also a great mistake. Movements, airs, and graces which are effective on the stage, when executed by well-trained, naturally graceful performers, are wholly out of place on the polished floor of the ballroom, and certainly not suited to the general requirements of drawing-room dancing, which should be, above all, an amusement in which the many can take part, and not merely an opportunity for the few to show off. Of course the study of fancy or stage dancing, *as a study*, is sometimes useful, and is now very generally taught as a means of acquiring grace and deportment; but it will be admitted that the due appreciation and feeling for art which enables us to give to every style its own peculiar and legitimate character should also teach us to make the proper and necessary distinction between stage and drawing-room dancing.

'Lookers-on,' the proverb says, 'see most of the game.' The perpetual dancers are hardly aware how very unbecoming it is to get hot and overdone. There is so much of beauty and of dignity in quiet, graceful movement, that if the stately old-fashioned dances could be reintroduced it would give great pleasure to those who sit by and watch with interest, even if they no longer take much share in the active business of a ball.

There can be no question that some of the simple square dances, even if only walked through with due regard to time and measure, would be a great social improvement, and would enable many to take part in balls who are now left out in the cold. Why are those people who cannot waltz, who dislike it—which is by no means uncommon among many of the most charming of both sexes—to be debarred from (actively) participating in balls? Some of them try to waltz when quite incapable of the art, and become a terror to their companions. Then there are those who, no longer so young and active as they once were, still, for the sake of good-fellowship, like to take a share in the gay, bright scene in the ballroom, and

help to make it pleasant. The 'sitting-out' does not by any means fill up the place which the more sober kind of dancing should occupy. Before closing the subject of square dances it should be added that, to make these a perfect success in a ballroom, there ought always to be one or two gentlemen at every ball who would help to make up the sets and do other little acts of kindliness. It is impossible for the hostess to be everywhere at once, and a little assistance from members of the family or friends does much to make things pass off well.

With regard to 'round' dancing, there can be but one opinion as to the delight of a waltz danced by a well-matched couple to the strains of one of Strauss's or Waldteufel's or Linka's beautiful tunes. No other dance can be compared to this, and the description of the *valse à trois temps* by Mr. d'Egville (p. 419) will bring back the recollection of many a happy hour to those who have the gift, and with that the necessary training, to enter thoroughly into it.

With the technical description of dances which completes this chapter my brief essay may conclude, after just one word more has been said as to the manners and style of the present day. It is for us who are taking our part in the world around us to watch that, with all our modern advantages, with the happy state of improved social intercourse that has done so much to raise the moral standard of society, we do not let the good old forms and ceremonies slip away from us altogether. They are the means by which the young are taught most valuable lessons, and, above all, a proper and courteous way of behaving towards those older than themselves.

Dance well if you do it at all; go out into the world; enjoy yourself as best as you can, and all the better because you must remember you have a share in helping towards the enjoyment of others. It seems now to be taken for granted that everyone can dance, and that no teaching is necessary. This book upon dancing will prove the fallacy of this idea. Again, people talk of old-fashioned manners as if good manners ought ever to be out of fashion. There is simply not enough

reflection given to these things nowadays, and less care is taken every year in teaching the young the numberless thoughtful, courteous acts which go so far to make life better and happier. Are we any the better for letting these things go and taking our lives in such a rush that there is no time for civility? It is in the drawing-rooms of the leaders of society that these things must be found time for, and must be taught and acquired. There still remains much that is pleasant and courteous. Let the present generation keep it up, and leave it as a precious inheritance to those who must succeed them.

On the subject of the *tempi* to be observed in dance music, I am enabled to add an authoritative word, as it is dictated by that most distinguished composer, Herr Eduard Strauss. In a letter now before me the Austrian musician (after commenting on the untrustworthiness of the metronome because of its tendency to slow down) gives the following scale :—

Valse . .	76	Maelzel metronome
Polka . . .	116	
Polka-mazurka .	58	
Galop . .	144	

DESCRIPTION OF DANCES

By Louis d'Egville

THE VALSE À TROIS TEMPS

The most popular and delightful of all modern ballroom dances is undeniably the waltz *à trois temps*. The *tempo* of this dance should be as nearly as possible that observed by Edward Strauss when conducting his own or his gifted brother's waltzes. This *tempo* is marked but moderate, affording ample time to make three distinct movements for each bar of waltz-time. The step should consist of sliding movements in which the knees play a most important part. Anyone who cannot use his knees quickly and yet gently will always remain a hard, uncomfortable waltzer. The weight of the body must necessarily be taken into account while the steps are being formed, and it is just the quiet and skilful disposition or management of this weight which constitutes the greatest difficulty in waltzing and

indeed in many other dances also. A keen sense of balance will greatly help to overcome this difficulty, but balance will not be induced or assisted by the employment of unnecessary force.

All who would excel in waltzing should acquire complete mastery over the reverse turn. To move about gracefully and agreeably in a crowded ballroom will be quite impossible to those who cannot waltz equally well in all directions—i.e. forwards and backwards without turning, also to the right, in the ordinary way of turning, and to the left in the reverse turn. Reversing the turn but waltzing the right way of the room is also extremely useful, and turning to the right but travelling the left way of the room is, similarly, also of service. Pivoting and crossing the feet will be necessary for the successful performance of these variations in the reverse turn. All this should be quietly and unobtrusively performed, so that all semblance of display may be completely avoided. Hopping or jumping is both inelegant and tiring, though a certain amount of spring from the knees suits the dancing of some people, but not all. In any case the feet should never leave the floor. A very tall man hopping and lifting his feet while twirling round presents a truly grotesque appearance. This comical effect is increased by dancing beyond the *tempo*—i.e. too fast. Some girls waltz equally well and look lighter by dancing on the ball of the foot or 'half-point.' When this is the case there is no harm in keeping the heels raised ; but this effect is not admissible for a man. Walking slowly up the room and occasionally breaking into a listless waltz is a vulgar and ridiculous manner of spoiling the true waltz. I have often wondered how a lady could ever consent to be made to look so supremely absurd as she certainly does when pushed along in this waddling, dawdling fashion. This objectionable innovation is, I fear, an English one. Truly it is not a happy one. Some of the American variations on the waltz *à trois temps* are agreeable and effective, but 'Hop-waltz,' 'Slow-waltz,' and 'Lurch' are abominations. The waltz may, with certain modifications or alterations in the rhythm, be danced to the music of nearly all the other round dances. Instead, then, of shelving the charming polkas, mazurkas, and marches of Gungl', Strauss, Waldteufel, and many other distinguished foreign composers, they might well be occasionally played for waltzing, and thus infuse more suitable variety and vitality into modern ball room dances than exist at present.

THE POLKA

The polka is an easy, cheerful dance, with an exhilarating rhythm about it, which probably accounts to a great extent for the inelegant 'rollicking' manner in which some people dance it. If properly performed, it is, however, less fatiguing than the waltz, while the difference of rhythm affords a pleasant change from the clockwork-like movement of the latter dance. In polka time there are four beats (quavers) in the bar, to which three steps are made, with a rest on the fourth beat. On the third beat one foot should be sharply drawn up behind the other, allowing the point only to touch the floor, but never entirely leaving the floor. Here, again, the principal difficulty will be to transfer the weight of the body from the foot that follows on to the one which has formed the step, without jerking or jarring. Some people are content to make three stamping movements do duty for the polka. This is ugly, but easily learnt. Avoid throwing the weight upon the leg which forms the step, and turn the knees outwards. The polka may be danced forwards and backwards and reversed, like the waltz. There are some variations which may be introduced with advantage. Of these, the so-called 'Ostend Polka' and 'American' or 'Side-step Polka' are among the best. The pupil should know that new and bewildering names are frequently given to old and well-known variations of both the waltz and the polka. The positions of the dancers were, on the introduction of the polka in the 'thirties,' similar to those taken in Polish character dances ; but for the last forty or fifty years the fashion has been for the gentleman to hold his partner in the same manner as in the waltz and other round dances. In any case, observe an erect position of the figure, avoid jumping, and also the ridiculous habit of stamping.

THE POLKA-MAZURKA

This charming dance possesses a *cachet* of its own, and ought most certainly to find a place in every ballroom. For reasons not to be explained one never sees it danced in England ; but in Vienna and Budapest it is a fashionable dance both at Court and at public balls, where the enjoyment of it is considerably enhanced by the dainty and beautiful music which Austrian and Hungarian composers have written for it. The polka-mazurka contains a mazurka step joined to the polka, and

might perhaps be more correctly designated mazurka-polka. The six movements of the dance occupy two bars of three-quarter-time music. The feet should never entirely leave the floor, and great use should be made of the knees, which should bend and straighten continuously during the movements. Galop steps and waltz *à deux temps* may be interpolated occasionally by way of variation; but this must be done with judgment and skill, or the effect may prove uncomfortable for the dancers, though, no doubt, amusing to the onlookers.

THE QUADRILLE AND LANCERS

These figure dances, commonly called 'Squares,' were very popular and fashionable many years ago, when it was the custom to introduce *glissades*, *chassés*, and other movements into the various figures. They are still often danced, or rather walked, *à tempo* on the Continent, but in England they are for the most part dealt with in a somewhat contemptuous or occasionally apologetic manner. Under existing circumstances the result is chaotic and bungling, and no wonder then that the mere mention of 'Squares' should be enough to alarm all lovers of genuine dancing. This is certainly not as it should be; for if people would only take the trouble to acquire a correct knowledge of the five simple figures of both dances, and endeavour, moreover, to walk them smartly and strictly in time, bringing the feet well together at the end of their phrases, they would discover that a good deal of hitherto unknown satisfaction may be got out of these old but neglected friends, the quadrille and the lancers.

MINUETS, PAVANES, AND GAVOTTES

These and other old-fashioned dances are effective both on the stage and in the drawing-room, and are, moreover, extremely useful in the class-room as a means of teaching balance and quiet grace. As every ballet-master or teacher of dancing invents or puts together his own version of these dances, it is, under existing circumstances, impossible to include them in ball-programmes, because of the entire absence of unanimity which would prevail as to movements, figures, &c. The 'Menuet de la Cour,' arranged by Gardel for Queen Marie Antoinette, is a noble, stately dance, very useful as a study,



THE PAS DE QUATRE

but too long and too complicated for modern ball-room use. Some of the shorter minuets which were in vogue during the seventeenth century would be more easily learnt. They are not difficult.

The gavotte is a dainty rhythm, considerably livelier than either of the two dances just noticed. A capital arrangement, suitable in every way for either drawing-room or stage performance, is the 'Kaiserin Gavotte,' which comes from Berlin, where it has been danced at the Court balls with great success. The 'Gavotte de Vestris' is a difficult dance composed by the *protégé* of Frederic the Great. It can only be effectively performed by those who possess very neat execution, and is therefore, perhaps, best left to professional dancers.

SCOTCH REELS AND STRATHSPEYS

Scotch dances are picturesque to look at, amusing to dance, and afford excellent practice. Vigour and sharpness must be freely employed in forming the various steps, while the general Scotch characteristics of their performance should never be lost sight of. There are two *tempi* chiefly used in Scotch dancing—viz. the quick or reel *tempo* and the slow or strathspey *tempo*. To the former, short, sharp sliding movements are danced; to the latter, hopping, lifting, pointing, and turning movements such as those of the 'Highland Fling' and 'Sword dance' are executed. The figures of the 'reel,' 'Hooligan' and 'eightsome,' are simple enough; it is the steps that require special attention and practice. The pipers of some regiments are adepts in this style of dancing, but not always satisfactory as teachers, because they lack that power of dissection which enables a first-rate professor to pull every step to pieces, demonstrate its composition bit by bit as required, and also explain its due relation to the music. Those who essay Scotch dancing should be able to dance at least four slow and four quick steps, otherwise their performance will be monotonous.

THE PAS DE QUATRE, OR BARN DANCE

The pas de quatre is a lively dance composed of an old Scotch lilt and the old schottische hops. As it is essentially a dance for two people, the name 'pas de quatre' is a misnomer.

When the dance was first introduced into society, it was danced to a tune that was being played nightly for a burlesque pas de quatre at the Gaiety Theatre, in which four young ladies did what is called 'high kicking.' People with theatrical aspirations were, no doubt, under the impression that they were actually taking part in a real stage dance, and so, leaning now to the right, now to the left, pointed and stamped merrily round the ballroom in time to the popular composition of Meyer Lutz, the musical director of the Gaiety Theatre. 'Barn dance' is an American designation; but as many other dances take place in barns out West, it is difficult to see why the title is specially applied to this Scotch lilt and schottische hops. The entire movement consists of three slides and a hop danced four times straight forward, hand in hand and side by side with partners. The gentleman then holds the lady by the waist and the right hand, as in the waltz, and the two partners walk and hop eight times while turning, as in the old schottische. The galop step may be substituted for the hops if preferred.

THE COTILLON

BY MRS. GROVE

The cotillon, properly speaking, is more a game than a dance, more suitable for children than for grown men and women. It can hardly be called a dance, but cannot be omitted from this volume, as it finds such a prominent place in so many ballrooms.

It certainly is not a British pastime: there is something absurd in the thought of an Englishman, clad in his full armour of evening dress and starched linen, going down on his knees before a lady and gravely wiping out his own image from a looking-glass. The cotillon is a French dance, and for that reason I will give the names of the figures in French.

Once it was a solo dance; it then became a duet dance; from a duet dance it became one of the many *rondes* of France, accompanied by the song:

Ma commère, quand je danse
Mon cotillon va-t-il bien?

The word 'cotillon' is a short skirt, and in its ancient dance form it may be looked upon as one of the old French *branles*. As such it was introduced into England, where it became a



LE BAL PARÉ

An engraving after A. de St. Aubin

feature at merry entertainments, and allowed people of all ages to join in the romp and fun.

The cotillon has created quite a new industry. There are now several firms whose chief business it is to manufacture the many accessories by which hosts and hostesses of to-day bribe their guests to come to their balls. Forty or fifty years ago only, a cotillon consisted of simple figures with accessories at hand, such as cushion and mirror, handkerchief and chair, &c. The leader of the cotillon had then to be not only nimble of feet but fertile of brain. After consulting with his hostess and



The Cotillon
(*After J. Collett*)

with his lady partner, he would arrange the most suitable figures for the evening. But the affair has become much more elaborate of late years.

Many hundreds of figures might be described here, but of the number I will choose a few, hoping thus to be of help to arrangers of cotillons. At the same time it must be remembered that on the individual organising of the figures, and the fun and frolic with which they are performed, depend the success of the cotillon ; and so, to begin with, I will mention a few figures which need no accessories.

La Conversation.—The leader introduces two dancers to a lady. Both must address her in one single sentence, and she will bestow the favour of a dance on the man who has been able to please her most.

Le Mouchoir.—A lady will knot one corner of her handkerchief; her partner introduces four men to her, who each choose a corner of the handkerchief. The lucky one is he who has found the knot.

La Trompeuse.—A lady advances towards a man and invites him to dance, but just as he accepts the honour with much pleasure, she whirls round suddenly and dances off with another partner. This figure may be reversed.

Les Dames Cachées.—Several ladies hide behind a curtain in which there is an opening; they each put out a hand, and gentlemen go up to this curtain, choose a hand, and are permitted to waltz with its owner.

Le Huit entre Deux Chaises.—A figure 8 is described around two chairs, placed back to back in the middle of the room.

Les Quatre Coins.—Four ladies rise from their seats, and each of them stands in a corner. The leader and four men perform a wild round in the centre of the room; after a few turns they separate, and each rushes towards a lady: the fifth has to console himself as best he can and to return to his place.

Le Fandango.—Four men go to a corner each and bend one knee. Four ladies perform the *chaîne des dames* of the quadrille with them.

L'Artichaut.—All form chain and take hands and wind round the leading couple; the last reverse the order and unwind the chain. A general waltz finishes the figure.

La Finale.—The leading couple and all the other couples place themselves as for a polonaise, and all walk up and salute the hostess. The first couple lift up arms, and all the others have to pass through this archway before bowing.

Among the figures with accessories I will not mention the cushion, the fan, the bouquet, the mirror, the ribbons, &c., which are well known, but those which are perhaps less familiar and at the same time are easy to perform.

Pile ou Face.—The lady asks for head or tail; a coin is thrown, and if she wins a dancer will waltz with her, if she loses he will pass on to another lady.

Le Parapluie.—Two partners are brought to a lady; she gives an umbrella to one and she dances with the other. He of the umbrella has to hold it open over the waltzing couple, and follow them thus through the whole figure.

La Pêche à la Ligne.—A lady holds a fishing-rod and line at the end of which hangs a biscuit; several men are brought up to her, they kneel before her and must try and catch the biscuit with their teeth. He who is sufficiently skilful has the honour of dancing with the fair angler.

La Loterie.—Several presents are placed on a table; the leader gives some numbers to the dancing men, who in their turn offer one to each lady; each leads his partner towards the object she has won, and waltzes with her.

Le Chevalier de la Triste Figure.—A lady holds a lighted taper in her hand; two men invite her to dance; she gives the lighted taper to one of them and dances with the other. He of the taper must follow them with it lighted throughout the figure.

Les Ballons.—Three ladies stand in the middle of the room, each holding a small air-ball; the cotillon leader and a number of men dance around the ladies; at a given signal they each make a grab for an air-ball; those who succeed may dance with a lady, the others return, crestfallen, to their seats.

Steeplechase.—An equal number of men and women stand opposite each other in lines. The leader arrives with his partner, and between them they hold a small hedge; the men must jump over it before they may waltz with the ladies.

Le Chasse à Courre.—A lady sits at the far end of a room, and the leader places small obstacles, such as footstools, all over the room. Two men are invited by him to compete for the honour of waltzing with the lady; they must hop on one foot over the obstacles, and he who arrives first becomes the fortunate partner of the lady.

Le Postillon.—The cotillon leader gives to his partner a large collar ornamented with bells; he and other men dance around her, and she places the collar around the neck of the man with whom she wishes to dance. This figure is lively, especially if danced to the tune of a polka.

From the above it will be seen that no special description of the cotillon can be written. Inventiveness and high spirits, aided by flirtation, and perhaps by a spice of malice, are the best tutors. Women like the cotillon, and, to do them justice, not

all like it for the sake of the spoil they may gather from it; for it gives them the rare chance of showing their preferences and of enabling them to pay out now and again the men who, through conceit, neglect, or indolence, have displeased them. As this is an age of woman, we may expect to see the cotillon flourish for some time yet in our ballrooms, and as its accessories give employment to many hands and comfort the dowagers for their sleepless nights, we must not grudge it its success.

INDEX

ABY

ABYSSINIA, the Tigritiya, 72, 342; funeral dance of, 79; sacred dances, 118
Accompaniments of the dance. *See* Dance-songs *and* Instrumental accompaniments
'Acta Joannis,' reference in, to our Lord and the Apostles dancing, 94
Adam, Adolphe, 370
Æschylus, and the art of gesture and scenic dancing, 39; dances in his dramas, 48
Afghan circular dance, 85, 86
Africa, tribal dances of, 78, 82, 88
After-dinner dances of the Middle Ages, 133
Agonalia, the, 62
Ain, dance-song of the, 271
Air de la Clochette, 246
Aïssaoua, religious dance of the, 119
Albanian dances, 53–58
Albert, the late Prince Consort, 404
'Albion's Triumph,' seventeenth-century masque, 138
Aldegarde, Count, in the first quadrille at Almack's, 403
Aleutian islanders, mimetic dance of, 68
Alexander III. of Scotland, legend of his marriage feast, 181

ANI

Algeria, religious dance of the Aïssaoua, 119
Alleman, the, 309
Allemande, the, 299, 395
Almack, Mr., 401
Almack's, first drawing-room polka danced at, 230; opening of, 401; the lady patronesses, 401, 402; difficulty of obtaining admission to, 402; the first quadrille, 403; introduction of the waltz, 404; decline in popularity, and closing of, 404
Almain, the, 299
Alman, the, 395
America, dances of. *See* North America, South America, &c.
American polka, 421
American quadrille, 283
'An old man is a bed full of bones,' old English dance, 154
'Ancient' dances of China, 352
Andalusia, dances of, 318, 322, 331
Anderson, Dr., in a Burmese death dance, 76
Anglo-Saxon dances, 128; the gleemen's feats and dances, 128–130, 136; character of 129
Animals, dances in imitation of, 52, 67, 78, 84, 128
Animals, dancing of, 7, 129, 228

ANN

Anne of Austria, 328
Annen Polka, the, 405
Anthema, the, 50
Apports, village feasts of Berri, 274
Apnpo, the, 308
Arab dances, 307
Aragon, dances of, 330
Arascabilaire dancers, 217
Araucanians, dance of the, 82
Archmimes of Roman funeral dances, anecdotes of, 62
Argentine, ceremony of the Pehuenches for exorcising sickness, 73
Arnaöut, the, 53–58
Artemis, festivals of, 47, 52
Asia Minor, dances of, 58
Assyrian mummers, 24
Aston, 394
Asturians, dances of the, 319
Atholl, Duke of, 412
Auber, 343
Augustus, Emperor of Rome, great development of dancing in his reign, 63
Auresca, the, 314
Australia, the Korroborae, 82, 90–92; native battle dance, 389
Autos, dances joined to, 310, 329
Auvergne, dances and dance-songs of, 271, 272
Awálim, dancing-women of ancient Egypt, 16
Azores, dances of the, 308, 309

'BAB at the Bowster,' Scottish dance, 185
Baccelli, Giovanna, 372
Bacchu-ber, the, 274
Bach, 343
Bagpipes, Scottish, 183; Irish, 199
Baile de los Seises, 106
Bailes, 106, 309, 319; and danzas, distinction between, 326
Bailes llanos ó tonadillas, 319

BAL

Baillie, Miss, in a Scotch reel before the Queen (1849), 408
Baixa, the, 308
Balada, 308
Baladines, 245
Balaléica, the, Russian musical instrument, 238
Balan, French dancer, 363
Ballatoria, or Choraria, covered places in front of churches, for mystery plays, 97
Ballet, the oldest known, 10; in Russia, 239; in Italy, 332; uncertainty of its origin, 360; in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, 361–363; moral ballets, 363; training for the, 363–365; costume, 365, 380; famous dancers of the eighteenth century, 365–369; a Covent Garden programme (1734), 368; at the King's Theatre (afterwards Her Majesty's), 369, 370; in Vienna, 370; Grisi and Elssler, 370; choregraphy at rehearsals, 370; Giovanna Baccelli, 372; present condition of, 378–380; music, 396
Ballet Comique de la Reyne, 361
Ballet de la Cour, 362
Ballet de la Royne, 246, 247
Ballet des Matelots, 301
Ballet-pantomime, the first, 363; of ancient Greece, 50
Ballets Ambulatoires, 307
Ball-playing dances, 16, 20, 68, 99
Ball suppers, 410, 411
Balls, hostesses and guests, 411; decoration of the rooms, 411; in country houses, 411; public balls, 412; overcrowding of rooms, 413; ballroom etiquette, 413, 415, 416, 419; introductions, 414; help for the entertainers, 414, 418; inviting guests, 414; selection of dances, 415; result of the abandonment of square dances,

BAL

415; style in dancing, 416, 418
Baltasarini. *See* Beaujoyeulx
Barina, the, 220
'Barnaby,' dance tune, 170
Barn dance, 379, 423
Basque dances, 8, 217; great number and variety of, 310, 312, 316; the Pordon dantza, 310; village dances under municipal supervision, 312; the Edate, 312, 314, 315; the Mutchico, or Saut Basque, 313; the Zorzico, 314; dancing in churches in the eighteenth century, 317
Bathyllus, Roman dancer, 63
Battle dance of Australian natives, 389
Batuque, the, 308
Bavaria, dance music of, 398
Bayadères, the, 344–347, 349, 350
Baylata, 308
Bear dance, in honour of Artemis, 52; of North American Indians, 78; of gipsies, 228
Bears, dancing, 129, 130, 228
Beaujoyeulx, 246, 361, 396
Bedouin tribes, sword dance of, 195
'Bee,' the, modern Egyptian dance, 22
Beethoven, 370, 399
Beggar's Opera, the, 396
'Begging' dance of Dakota Indians, 87
Belgium, the dance in, 302
Bells, worn in the Morris dance, 137-139, 186; by gipsy dancers, 218
Benares, religious dances of, 347
Benserade, 362
Bent, Theodore, 52; on the sacred dances of Abyssinia, 118
Berenguer IV., Count Ramon, 319
Bergamasca, the, 333
Bergerette, the, 100, 101
Bergomask, the, 164, 334

BOL

Bergonza de Botta, 332
Berkeley, Miss, 406
Berlin, a royal torch dance, in 1821, 294
Berri, dances of, 271, 274
Berri, Duchesse de, 244
Besançon, an Easter-day sacred dance held at, up to 1738, 100
Beth-ha-shoeba, dance feast of the Israelites, 30
Bhopal egg dance, 347
Biblical references to dancing, 24; described as a symbol of joy, 25, 31; generally mentioned in connection with singing and musical instruments, 25, 31; Miriam and Judith leaders of the dance, 25; the dance round the golden calf, 26; the daughters of Shiloh, 26; Jephthah's daughter dancing to her fate, 27; the dances mostly executed by women, 28; David's dance before the Ark, 28; no further records of sacred dancing during his reign, 28; the Amalekites slaughtered while dancing, 28; Salome before Herod, 30
Biniou, a rustic instrument of Brittany, 266
Birds, dancing of, 7; dances in imitation of, 52, 84
'Blackberry Blossom,' ancient dance tune, 206
Blackie, Professor, on the lyrical drama, 50; on dancing as an act of worship, 93
Boehme's book on German dances, 11, 289, 290, 300
Bohemia, the birthplace of the polka, 8; number and variety of the dances, 225; village festivals, 225; sword dance, 226; witches' dance, 226; influence of the Thirty Years' War 227; nomenclature of dances, 227; the Polka, 228–232
Boleras, the, 324

BOL

Bolero, the, 320, 321 ; music of, 323
Bombay, the dancing women of, 344
Borgia, Lucrezia, 332
Bourrée d'Auvergne, 271, 272
Boys, dancing, of Persia, 351
Braemar annual gathering, 183
Brahms, 399
'Brangill of Poictu,' 256
Branle des Ermites, 250
Branle des Lavandières, 250
Branle du Haut Barrois, 249
Branles, 246, 248, 256, 263 ; varieties of, 249 ; the 'rû de vache,' 249 ; of Brittany, 249 ; branles mimés, 250, 251 ; branles des flambeaux, 251 ; French nursery rhymes founded on, 252 ; of Normandy, 269, 270 ; the branle carré, 270
Brawl, the, in England, 166 ; Scotch, 167
Brazil, Central, funeral dances of, 76, 77 ; straw dancing dress of Indians, 79, 80
Breadalbane, Lord, in a Scotch reel danced before the Queen (1849), 408
Brittany, the branles of, 249 ; the 'Pardons,' 266, 274 ; a curious old dance, 267 ; ancient sword dance in honour of the sun, 268 ; inaugurating a new threshing floor, 268 ; the dance-songs, 269 ; belief of the people in fairies and pigmies, 269 ; ancient New Year custom, 290
Brougham, Lord, Leech's picture of, dancing opposite the woolsack, 231
Buckingham Palace, State balls at, 407, 408
Buddhist Devil dance, 75
Buffalo dance of North American Indians, 67
Burchell, Mr., on the dance of the Bushmen, 89
Burmese death dances, 75, 76

CAT

'Burning ballet,' a tragedy at a royal festival (1393), 243, 244
Bushmen, dance of the, 89
Butler, Lady Harriet, in the first quadrille at Almack's, 403

CACHUCHA, the, 330, 370
Cadiz dancing-girls, 318, 326
Caldron festival of gipsies of the Ottoman empire, 215
Camargo, Madame, 367, 369
Cambridge, Duke of, 404
Canada, festivals of the north-western tribes, 88
Canaïca, the, 241
'Canary,' the, 169
Cancan, the, 286, 287
Candiote dance, 53, 274
'Candle-rush,' 172
Canroy, Eustache de, 265
Cardinals joining in the dance in the sixteenth century, 332
Carlton House, 409
Carmagnole, the, 285, 286
Carole, the, 131, 292 ; the name afterwards applied to songs, 131
Carols, 201. *See also* Christmas Carols
Carpenters' dance, German, 296
Carrica, the, 316
'Carrillon de Dunkerque,' 252
Caryatis, the, 52
Cascarrots, the, 217
Cashel, an eighteenth-century 'assembly' at, 199
Casos, a social dance at, 59
Castanets, Spanish, 8, 376, 385
Castlereagh, Lady, patroness of Almack's, 402
Castro, Inez de, 319
Catalonia, dances of, 310
Cathacks, the, 347
Catherine II. of Russia, fondness of, for the ballet, 239
Catlin on the 'medicine' dance of the North American Indians, 73
Cato, licentiousness of Roman dancing denounced by, 64

CAY

Cayenne, death dance of natives, 76
Celebes, Northern, war dance of, 76
Cellarius, M., introducer of the polka into Paris, 229, 230
Cerito, 370
Ceylon, the professional devil dancer of, 75
Chaconne, the, 279, 328
Chacota, the, 308
Chahut, the, 286
'Chanson d'Cramignon,' 302
'Chanson de Robin,' 146
Charambas, the, 309
Charles I., Court festivities of his reign, 170; his patronage of dancing, 170, 196
Charles II. leading the dance at Whitehall, 166
Charles VI. of France, narrow escape of, in the 'burning ballet,' 243, 244
Charles IX. of France, 244, 265, 332
Chateaubriand, on the dancing of savages, 71
Chaucer, quoted, 127, 128, 131, 133, 137, 180, 330
Cheironomia, 38, 326
Cheirosophi, Greek dancers, 38
Cheshire May song, 151
Chesterfield, Lord, 367
'Chevalier du guet,' an old French branle, 252
Chili, dances of, 118, 375
Chimney-sweeps' dances, 151
China, the oldest known ballet held in, 10; characteristics of the dances, 351; intimate connection of music and dancing, 352; State dancers, 352; 'small' and 'great' dances, 352; honours given to dancing-masters, 352; ritual dances, 352-355; hymn tune, 355; Court ceremonial dances, 356
Chopin, 234, 343, 397
Choraria. *See* Ballatoria
Choregraphy, the Egyptians the inventors of, 22; choregraphic figure dance of Athens, 46; example of, 371
Chota Nagpore, dances of, 347
'Christes Kirk of the Grene,' ballad, 140
Christina, Queen of Sweden, ancient Greek dance performed before, by Professor Meibom, 44
Christmas carols, originally sacred dances, 10; origin of the name, 131; French, 265, 270
Christmas Day festivities, 131; dancing in country churches, 131; splendour of the festivals under the Anglo-Norman kings, 132; in the time of Henry II., 132; in the early part of the sixteenth century, 157; curious Cornish children's custom, 173; sword dances of the north of England, 175
Church, early, dancing allowed by, in the churches, 8; severity of the Fathers against certain dances, 30; dancing a part of the ritual, 94-96; the sexes never mixed in the churches, 96; dancing in churches and churchyards forbidden by the early Councils, 96, 97, 268; introduction of mystery plays, 96
Chyaneros, gipsies of South America, 220
Cicero, dancing denounced by, as licentious, 64
Cinquepas, the, 253, 334
Circular dances, ancient, 25, 36, 85; Scottish, 194; Irish, 194, 200; Polish, 235; Russian, 236; German, 292; Japanese, 359
Clappers, Egyptian, 24, 377
'Colkelbie Sow,' or 'Cowkelbie Sow,' Scottish ballad, 180
College Hornpipe, 394
Contredances of New England, curious names of, 177

CON

CON

Contredanse, the, 280, 402
Coopers' dance, German, 295
Coote, 407, 408
Coranto, the, 395
Cordax, the, 187
Cornhill, Maypole set up in, 147
Cornwall, the Fadé or Furry dance of Helston, 172; Christmas Eve customs, 173
Corroberee, corroberri. *See* Korroborae
Cortez, Ferdinand, 330
Cotillon, the, 409; description of, 424–428
Courante, the, 246, 255, 256
Courts of Love, 248
Courtship dances of savages, 67
Cowper, Lady, patroness of Almack's, 402
Cracovienne, the, 232, 235
Cramignon, the, 302
Crane dance, or Geranos, 45, 46, 53
Cratinus, danced in his own dramas, 39
Crenay, Madame de, 283
Créqui, Marquise de, 365
Crete, popularity of the ancient dances in, 52
Csárdás, the, 220, 223, 224
'Cuckolds all Awry,' 166
Cuisley Ciuil, Irish bagpipe, 201
Cumberland, Duke of (1765), at the opening of Almack's, 401
Curetes (priests of Cybele), martial dance of, 52
Cushion dance, the, 158, 159, 169, 185, 393
Czechs, dances of the, 226

DÆDALUS, the originator of mixed dances in Greece, 44
Dahomey, dance in honour of visitors, 88
Dakota Indians. *See* North American Indians
Dance of Cakes, Russian, 239
Dance of the Hours, Greek representation of, in the Paris Museum, 360

DAN

Dance-songs 5; of Egypt, 17; of the Greeks, 42, 46, 50, 52, of the Zuñis, 84; Scottish, 185, 187, 191; Irish, 201, 202; of Bohemia, 227; of Poland, 232; Russian, 236; French, 251, 265, 269, 271; German, 291, 293; Belgian, 302; Scandinavian, 305; of Portugal, 307; Spanish, 330; of India, 346
Dances, of Egypt, 15; Biblical, 24; of the Jews, after their dispersal, 32; of the ancient Greeks, 34; and Romans, 60; of savages, 65; ritual, 93; English, 124; Scottish, 179; Irish, 198; Welsh, 209; of gipsies, 213; of Europe, 222–343; time and rhythm of, 387; description of, 419. *See also* under names of countries and peoples
Dancing, regarded as a frivolous pastime, 1, 12; prejudice against, in Scotland, 1, 182, 183; religious worship the origin of most dances, 2, 7, 10, 24, 95; rhythmic accompaniments of, 4; its alliance with song, 5, 80; the home of true dancing among oppressed nations, 6, 32; a faithful reflection of individual and racial characteristics, 7, 8, 125, 221, 284; indulged in by animals, 7; perfection of, in ancient Greece, 8, 34; allowed in sacred buildings by the early Christians, 8; character of Oriental, 10; the literature of 10, 11; its morality, 30, 31; conducive to the preservation of health, 72; local forms of, made use of by missionaries, 75, 226; an accessory to religious rites from time immemorial, 93; wide distribution of the circular form, 194; supposed power of, to arrest the effects of the bites of poisonous

DAN

spiders, 341, 342, 351; teaching of, 372, 384; accessories of, 376, 426; its practical use, 381; value of regular and systematic training, 384. *See also* Balls
Dancing boys of Persia, 351
Dancing dervishes, 18, 119, 390
Dancing dresses of savages, 79, 80
Dancing girls, Egyptian, 16, 19, 20, 22, 360; of ancient Rome, 64; kept in England in Chaucer's time, 131; gipsy, 213–216, 220; of the East, 213, 214; of Spain, 214, 215, 318, 326; of India, 344; of Persia, 350; of Japan, 356–359
Dancing legend of the fifteenth century, 101
Dancing swords and daggers, 167
Dansa de Donzellas, 310
Dansas dos Espingardeiros, 310
Dansas dos Mariyos, 310
Dansas dos Pratos, 310
Danse au Virlet, the, 248
Danse de la Basse Bretagne, 250
Danses basses, 244, 253, 292, 332
Danses hautes, 244, 292
Danses nobles, 245
Danza Prima, the, 319
Danzas and bailes, distinction between, 326
Danzas habladas, 309
Dargies, 186
Daudet, Alphonse, description of a farandole, 279
Dauphiné, dances of, 274
David, Louis, and Mlle. Guimard, 368
David's dance before the Ark, 27, 28, 94; no further records of sacred dancing during his reign, 28
Davies, Sir John, his poem 'Orchestra,' 11, 228
Dawson, James, description of the Korroborae, 90–92

ECH

Death dances, 4; of savages, 70, 75, 76; German, 297. *See also* Funeral dances
Delian festival, the, 45, 46
Dervishes, dances of, 18, 119; example of music, 390
Devadâsi, the, 349
Devil dances, 74, 76
Diane de Poitiers, 246
Dibdin, 394
Dickens, Charles, quoted, 171, 286
Dionysos, dances and hymns at the festivals of, 48, 50, 52
Dirk dance, 196
'Disguising,' 141
Dom Pedro I., 308, 310
'Don Giovanni,' minuet, 370
Double Jigs, 204, 206
Douglas, Lord, in a Scotch reel before the Queen (1849), 408
Dramatic dances of the ancient Greeks, 47, 48
Dreher, original name of the waltz, 299
Drum dance of the Eskimos, 82
Ducasses, 274
Dudak, the, 227
Dugdale, account of the ancient revels at Lincoln's Inn, 155
Dump, the, 164
Dundas, Dr., in a Scotch reel before the Queen (1849), 408
Duprast, 343
Dvořák, 399

EARLE, ALICE M., accounts of dancing in New England, 152, 176
Easter dance, Grecian, 58
Easter festival of the ancient Jews, 94
Eastern dances. *See* China, India, Japan, &c.
Eccles, jig composed by, 394
Echternach, dancing procession in honour of St. Willibrord, held at, 103; its probable origin, 104; the modern procession, 104–106

EDA

Edate, the, 312, 314, 316
Edward the Martyr, curious story of the murder of, 129
Edward VI., 157
Edwards, Mr. Sutherland, on modern Russian dancing, 240
Egg dance, English, 129; of Holland, 300; of Valencia, 326; Indian, 347
Egypt, dancing a part of the religion, 15, 93; representations of dancing on the monuments of, 15, 17, 19, 20, 23; inaccuracy of ancient Greek writers on Egyptian dancing, 15; dances in honour of the dead, 15, 19; rhythmic accompaniments of labour, 16; ball-playing dance, 16, 20; the dancing women of ancient Egypt, 16, 17, 20–22; dances accompanied by trained songstresses, 17; village festivals and dervish parties, 18; the dancing dervishes, 19, 119, 120; the art forbidden to the higher classes, and taught to slaves 20; adopted as a profession by low-class freemen, 20; modern dances and dancers, 22–24; Phallic festivals of, 143
El Baile de los Seises, at Seville Cathedral, 106–116
El Baile de Pifano, religious dance of the mining districts of Chili, 118
Eliot, Lady Charlotte, in a Scotch reel before the Queen, (1849), 408
Elizabeth, Empress of Russia, an accomplished dancer, 239
Elizabeth, Queen of England, said to have made Sir Christopher Hatton Lord Chancellor for his dancing, 125, 126; masque given before, by the benchers of Gray's Inn, 156; a great patroness of the dance, 157
Elssler, Fanny, 235, 330, 370

ENG

England, dancing in, 124; most modern dances imported from abroad, 124; the Hornpipe essentially the national dance, 124; skill of courtiers in the sixteenth century, 125; country dances, 126, 155, 158–161; dancing a necessary part of a gentlewoman's education, 126; the pastime denounced by the Puritans, 127, 147, 171; in Anglo-Saxon and Norman times, 128–130; after the Conquest, 130; introduction of Eastern dancing practices after the first Crusade, 131; Christmas Day customs and festivities, 131; in the Middle Ages, 133; after-dinner dances, 133; extravagance of the dance in the fifteenth century, 135; the Morris dance, 136; May Day dances 136–153; curious names of old English dances, 154, 168; revels in the Inns of Court, 155, 156; in Elizabeth's reign, 156, 164; stateliness of the Court dances, 157, 158; the Lavolta, the Passamezzo, and the Pavane, 164; the Brawl, 166; a ball in the time of Charles II., 166; dancing daggers and swords, 167; masques and pageants of the Courts of James I. and Charles I., 170; the Minuet and the Saraband, 171; local dances and customs, 172–176; the Polka craze in, 230–232, 405; opposition to the Waltz in, 299; assemblies at Almack's rooms, 401 (*see* Almack's); changes in the form of dances, 405, 410; the Lancers, 406; State balls in the early part of Her Majesty's reign, 407; the Cotillon of the period, 409. *See also* Christmas, May Day, Maypole, *and* Morris dance

ENO

Enoplic, the, 187
'En passant par la Lorraine,' 265
Entremets, or Intermezzi, 242, 360, 362
Eresby, Lady Willoughby de, patroness of Almack's, 402
Erman, on the dances of ancient Egypt, 16, 19, 20
Escarraman, the, 328
Eskimo drum-dance, for settling quarrels, 82
Espata danza, the, 316
Espringale, the, 292
Espringall, the, 201
Essaer (Essenes), choral festival of the, 94, 95
Esterhazy, Princess, 402, 404
Esturdia, the, 309
Eumelia, the, 187
Euripides' 'Orestes,' dramatic dance in, 48
Exorcism, dances used for, by savages, 70

FADÉ, or Furry, dance of Helston, 172
Fado, the, 308
Fan dance, Japanese, 359
Fancy balls of the Paris Opéra, 378
Fandango, the, 320; time and character of the dance, 321; curious anecdote of, 322
Fans, in association with dancing, 359, 377
Farandole, the, 277; how performed, 278; tragic stories connected with, 278
Faroë, dances and national music of, 303
Fellahs of Upper Egypt, wedding dance of, 23
Fer-Cengail, the, 201
Fer-Gigaoila, the, 201
'Festum Asinorum,' twelfth-century French religious festival, 98
Feudal dances, 104, 275, 296
Fewkes, Dr., on the dances of the Zuñi, 84

FRA

Fielding, Lady Jane, 406
Fiji, native estimation of dancing, 82
Flamenco, the, 322
Flanders, funeral dance of, 117, 275
'Flannel Jacket,' dance tune, 203
Flat-foot, fifteenth-century Scottish dance, 187
Florentine dances, 338
Flower dances of the Greeks, 50, 58
'Flowers of Edinburgh,' dance tune, 197
Fofa, the, 307, 309
Fogueiras de S. João, 309
Folias, 309
Forlana, the, 334
France, ritual dances of, 97–101; joined in by priests and clergy, 97, 98, 100; St. Vitus's dance in, 102; the Polka craze in Paris, 229; dancing essentially a French art, 242; the Intermezzi, or Entrements, 242; Court entertainments in the reign of Charles VI., 243; of Louis XIII. and Charles IX., 244; the 'danse basse' and the 'danse haute,' 244; the Italian style introduced by Catherine de' Medici, 245; characteristic of sixteenth century dancing, 247; the Courts of Love, 248; influence of French dancing on other European Courts, 248; the Branle, 248; provincial branles, 249; the Torch dance, 251; the Tourdion, 252; the Gaillarde, 253; the Pavane and the Courante, 255; the Menuet, 256; formal style of the eighteenth century, 257; a royal academy of dancing founded in 1662, 258; the Menuet de la Cour, 259; Court dances in provincial costume, 263; the

FRA

Gavotte, 263; dance-songs and their refrains, 265, 271; the dances and dance customs of Brittany, 266–269; of Normandy, 269, 270; village festivals, 270; the Bourrée, 271–274; provincial names for village feasts, 274; funeral dances, 275; obligatory dances, 275; mingling of aristocracy and peasantry in the dance, 276; a rural festival described, 277; the Farandole, 277; a Provençal farandole, 279; the Chaconne, 279; the Quadrille, 280–284; local dance customs of Roussillon, 284; the Carmagnole, 285; the Cancan, 286; the oldest dance tune, 287

Frankl, Dr., description of a modern Jewish banquet at Damascus, 33

Frazer, Mr. J. G., on the dances of savages, 67, 71, 72, 76

Frohntanz, the, 296

Funeral dances, 4; of ancient Egypt, 15, 19; of the Greeks, 41; Roman, 61, 62; of savages, 75–79; of Spain, 116, 329; of India, 117; of Flanders, 117, 275; of South America, 117; Scottish, 185; German, 291

Furry dance, the, 172

GAILLARDE, the, 246, 252, 253, 334, 395

Galicia, dances of, 327, 331

Gallarda, the, 328

Gallega, the, 327

Galop, the, 419

Gardel, 264, 422

'Gather up the Money,' dance tune, 206

Gauchet's poem, 'La Feste du Village,' 277

Gauls, dancing one of their chief pastimes, 242

GIP

Gautier, Théophile, 370

Gavotte, the, originally a Dauphiné peasants' dance, 263; introduced into Paris and remodelled, 263; the old form revived after the Revolution, 264; the modern Gavotte, 264, 403, 422, 423

Gavotte de Vestris, 423

Geisha girls of Japan, 357

Genlis, Madame de, 283

George IV., 409

Geranos, the. *See* Crane dance

Germany, the dances of, 13; introduction of dancing in churches, 97; St. Vitus's dance in, 102; the sword dance 195; warlike dances of the early Germans, 289; the ancient dances sacrificial rites, 290; New Year dances, 290; harvest festivals, 291; funeral dances, 291; the dance in folklore and saga, 291; influence of Christianity, 291; the Schuhplatteln, 292; the Schönpart, 292; the mediæval period, 292; peasant dances, 293; dancing at the conclusion of tournaments, 293, 294; the torch dance, 294; wedding dances, 294, 296, 297; the ring dance, 295; guild dances, 295; feudal dances, 296; the Siebensprung, 296; the Waltz, 298; the Allemande, 299; dance music of, 398

Ghawazees, or Ghazeeyehs, 21, 22

Ghillie-Callum, the, 195, 196

Ghost dances, 121

Ghoul dances, 121

'Gienys dance,' the, 174

Giga, or Gigue, 333, 334, 395

'Gigantones y los Enanos,' 327

Gipsies, dances of, 8, 213; probable gipsy origin of Eastern dancing girls, 213, 214; in Roumania, 214; in Russia, 214, 219; in the Ottoman

empire, 215; the gipsy dancing girls of Spain, 215; the figure-dancers, 217; the Cascarrots, 217; difference between Cascarrotac and Basque dances, 217; a gipsy legend, 218; in England, 218; Scottish, 219; of South America, 220; the Hungarian Tzigane, 220; dance tune of Indian gipsies, 221; time and rhythm of dances, 391
Gleemen, Anglo-Saxon, dances and feats of, 128–130, 136
Gluck, 264, 361, 366, 396
Goa, flower dance of convert boys at, 75
Godfrey, Mr., 409
Golden calf, dance of the Israelites round the, 26
Goldsmith, Oliver, 274, 276
Gollttraidheacht, the, 204
Gondoliers' dance, 334
Goosey-dancing, 173
Gopis dance, 349
Gordon, Jane, Duchess of, 402
Goths, military dance of, 137; sword dance, 195
Gow, Neil, 190
'Great' dances of China, 352
Greece, ancient, perfection of dancing in, 8; the religious nature of the people depicted in their dances, 34, 39; their sensitiveness to rhythm and proportion, 34, 36; alliance of dancing with music and poetry, 34, 37; special characteristic of the dances, 36; the primitive dances mostly circular, 36; gesture of more importance than feet movements, 37, 38; the poets teachers of hand gestures, 38, 39; character of the cultured classes, 38, 39; dancing a chief branch of education, 39; decadence of the art as the people degenerated, 40; influence of dancing on sculpture, 40; varieties of the dance: the Kubistic, the Spheristic, and the Orchestic, 41; funeral dances, 41; warlike dances, 41–45, 52; the Gymnopaidia and the Laconian, 41; the Pyrrhic, 42; Mysian war dances, 44; the Hormos, 44; the Geranos, or Crane dance, 45; the Delian festival, 45, 46; choregraphic figure-dance, 46; the festivals of Artemis, 47; dramatic dances, 47–50; the Emmeleia, the Kordax, and the Sikinnis, 47, 48; influence of theatrical dances on the people, 48; a standard of beauty and proportion for dancers, 50; dances illustrative of joy and merriment, 50; the Anthema, or flower dance, 50; dances in imitation of animals, 52; the Hyporchema, 52; the Caryatis, 52; religious dances, 93; the dancers of, 384
Greece, modern: the dances similar to those of the ancient Greeks, 52; popularity of the older forms in Crete, 52; the Arnaöut (Albanian dance), 53–58; the Ionian, 58; May and Easter dances, 58; a social dance at Casos, 59; the Isolano, 59
Greek teachers of dancing, 372
Greek tunes, time and rhythm of, 391
Greek writers on the dance, 15, 36–48
Greenland, native methods of settling disputes, 82
'Greensleeves and Pudding Pies,' old English dance, 154
Gregory XIII., Pope, 391
Grétry's Gavotte, 264
Grisi, Carlotta, 231, 370
Guards' ball to the Prince and Princess of Wales, at the Exhibition, Cromwell Road, in 1863, 409
'Guards' Waltz,' the, 409

GUG

Guglia di San Paolino, religious dance of Nola, Italy, 120
Guild dances of Germany, 295
Guimard, Mlle., 368
Guipuzcoa, dances of, 312-315
Gungl', 420
Guonod, 119
'Gwin ar Challaoued,' dance tune of Brittany, 267
Gymnopaidia, the, 41

HABAS VERDES, 330
Haddon, Professor, on the native dances and costumes of Torres Straits, 80, 83
Halfpenny Jig, 203
Hand gestures in dancing, 38, 326
Handel, 368
Hanover Square Rooms, 406
Harem dancers, Egyptian, 19, 22
Harley, Mr., in the first quadrille at Almack's, 403
Harp, Welsh, 210
Harris, Sir Augustus, on stage dancing, 378
'Hart's Set,' 406
Hatton, Sir Christopher, said to have been made Lord Chancellor by Queen Elizabeth for his dancing, 125, 126
Hay, the, 168
Haydn, 316, 370, 399
Haymarket Theatre, the corps de ballet of fifty years ago, 364
Hebrews, dances of, 24, 94. *See* Biblical references to dancing *and* Israelites
Heine, H., 370
Heinrich der Vogler, Emperor, 296
Henri III., 396
Henri IV., 362
Henry VIII., observance of May Day customs by, 138; a frequent performer in masques and pageants, 156, 157
Her Majesty's Theatre, 369

IND

Herculaneum, dances depicted on the walls of, 64
Hermann, Professor, on gipsy dances, 220, 223, 224
Highland Fling, 188, 197, 423
Highland Hornpipe, 197
'Highland Laddie,' song, 197
Highland Schottische, 179
Hindoos, preference of, for Scottish music, 189
Hippoclides' loss through dancing, 6
Holland, the dances of, 300; the Matelot dance, 301; numerous representations of the dance by Dutch painters, 302
'Hop,' Lancashire term for a dance, 129
Hoppesteres, Anglo-Saxon female dancers on one foot, 129
Hopping dance, Irish, 201
Hop-waltz, the, 420
Hormos, the, 44
Hormus, the, 187
Hornpipe, the, instructions for, by an eighteenth-century Scottish dancing-master, 11; the national dance of England, 124; Scottish, 196, 197; music of, 394
Horseback, dances on, 85, 238
Hringbrot, the, 305
Hungary, dances of, 219, 222; dance music the national music, 223; the Csárdás, 223
'Hunting of the Fox,' 169
Hyporchemes, the, 42, 52, 360

'I GELOSI,' Italian players, 361
'I loved thee once, I love no more,' old English dance, 154
Icelandic national dance, 305
'If all the world were paper,' old English dance, 154
'Illustrated London News,' the, on the polka craze, 230
India, funeral dances of, 117; Phallic festivals of, 143; the nautch girls and their dances, 344-347, 349; the Cathacks,

IND

or men dancers, 347; children's dances of Chota Nagpore, 347; Bhopal egg dance, 347; religous dances, 347, 348; aboriginal dance of the Khassia hills, 348; the Gopis dance, 349; the female dancers of the pagodas, 349
Indian gipsies, dance tune of, 221
Inns of Court, revels at the, 155; masque performed before Queen Elizabeth by benchers of Gray's Inn, 156; elaborate masque given at Whitehall, in 1633, 170; jigs named after, 202
Instrumental accompaniments of the dance: Biblical, 25, 29, 31; of later Jews, 32; of savages, 74, 85, 87, 90; old English, 129, 146, 148; Scottish, 190, 191; Irish, 199, 206; Welsh, 210; Russian, 238; French, 263, 266, 273, 274, 276, 277, 283; German, 290; Scandinavian, 293; Basque, 312, 316; Spanish, 319, 325, 326, 327; Italian, 336, 343; Indian, 346; of dervishes, 391
Intermezzi, or Entremets, 242, 360, 362
Inverness annual gathering, 183
Ionian duet dance, 58
Ireland dancing in, 193, 198; wakes, 199; circular dances, 200; the Jig, 201, 394; single and double jigs, 204; jig tunes, 204–207; an Irish Sabbath, 207; belief in the legend that the sun dances on Easter morn 210
Iroquois Indians. *See* North American Indians
Isabel of Aragon, 332
Isabel of Bavaria, 244
Isle of Man, May Day festivities, 152; Twelfth Day customs, 174
Isolano, the, 59

JAP

Israelites, solemnity and dignity of their dances, 24; the movements not governed by fixed rules, 24, 25; their dances of a circular order, 25; thanksgiving dance after the passage of the Red Sea, 26; separation of the sexes in the dance, 26; the dedication of the walls of Jerusalem, 28; the annual festivals at Jerusalem, 29; great influence of dancing upon them, 30; social dances at the feast of the Atonement, 32; after the dispersal: religious exaltation of those most oppressed, 32; wedding rejoicings of the Jews at Metz and Morocco, 32; a modern Jewish banquet, 33; their love of music and the dance, 212
Italy, dancing in, 13; religious dances, 120; Maypole dances, 144; revival of dancing in the fifteenth century, 331; ballets of the period, 332; sixteenth century dances, 332; participation of Church dignitaries in the dance, 332; character of the ancient dances, 333; Sicilian dances, 335; the Siciliana, 336; dances of Naples, 338; the Tarantella, 339–343; musical instruments 343

'JACK at Greenwich,' hornpipe, 394
Jaleo, the, 320, 330
Jamaica negro dance, 66; the Obeah or medicine-man's method of healing, 73
James I., 170, 182
James II., 201
James IV. of Scotland, 181, 187
James V. of Scotland, 1, 187
Japan, the Maikos, or dancing girls, 356–359; rarity of male dances, 359; ritual dances, 359

JAV

Java, native dance customs, 83
Jersey, Lady (1814), 402, 403
Jerusalem, dances at the annual festivals, 29
Jew's-harp, Scottish, 190, 191
Jews. *See* Israelites
Jig, Irish, 199, 203; English, 201; character of the ancient dance, 202; single and double jigs, 204; tunes, 204–207, 394; Welsh, 211; Italian, 334; Scottish, 402
'Joan Sanderson,' or the Cushion dance, 158, 169, 185, 393
'John, come kiss me now,' dance tune, 168
John, Duke of Austria, 257
Jongleurs, Norman, 129, 136, 391
Jota, the, 329, 330
Judges, Candlemas Day dance of, in Serjeant's Inn, 155
Juego de Pelota, 314
Jullien, 407, 408
Jumping dance, Bohemian, 227
'Jumping Saints,' name given to Whit Tuesday pilgrims to Echternach, 104

KAFFIR Negro domestic dance, 88
Kaiserin Gavotte, 423
Kakhava, a gipsy caldron festival, 215
Kakhyens of Northern Burmah, death dance of, 76
Kalends of January, heathen custom at the, 133
Kalmuck women's dance, 238
Karoles of Normandy, 270
Keliben, gipsy term for the dance, 215
Kemp, William, his dance from London to Norwich in 1599, 139; jigs named after, 203
Kennington Green, Maypole in, until 1795, 148
Kermesses, 274
Kerr, Miss, in a Scotch reel before the Queen (1849), 408

LAN

Khassian aboriginal dance, 348
Khorovodi, the, 237
Kilkenny, tragic result of a churchyard dance at, 200
Killie-Kallum, the, 195
King's Theatre (afterwards Her Majesty's), the ballet at the, 369
Kissing, in association with dancing, 83, 127, 149, 159, 168, 253, 264, 298
Kitchen Lancers, 414
Klepht dances, 58
Knox, John, denounced Queen Mary for dancing, 182
Koenig, 407
Kolomejka, the, 235
Korroborae, the, 82, 90–92
Kozaks, the, 235
Krakowiak, the, 235
Kronou Teknophagia, 52
Kropotkin, Prince, 286
Kubistic dancing, 41
Kukri dance, 88, 89
Kulu religious dances, 348

'LA Chanson du Mois de Mai,' dance-song, 269
'La Clochette,' Air de, 246
La Jok, 13
'La Prose de l'Ane,' 98
'La Robine,' dance tune, 273
'La Sylphide,' ballet, 370
La Tarasque, 120
Laal Koner, female dancer, made joint governor of the Mogul empire, 33
Labitzky, 407
Lacedæmonians, dances of the, 42
'Lackets,' a Manx Twelfth Day pastime, 174
Laconian, the, 41
Lambra, the, 308
Lancers, the, 280, 422; invention of, 406; the first set danced in London, 406; the figures, 407; included in State ball programmes, 407
Landes, peasants of the, 274

LAN

Lang, Andrew, quoted, 74
Langenberg, feudal dance still performed at, 296
Lanner, 121, 398
Laparogues, Polish dances, 235
Lapps, dances of, 305
Latewakes, 185
Lavare vane, Manx custom, 174
Lavolta, the, 8, 164
Lawes, William, 157
'Léandre et Héro,' ballet opera, 367
Leap-candle, 172
Lechner, Mlle. Olga de, 406
'Leiche,' the, German dance-song, 291
Les Olivettes, 279
'Les petits Riens,' ballet, 372
'Li Comici Fedeli,' Italian players, 362
Lieven, Countess, 402, 404
Limoges, religious dances at, in the twelfth and eighteenth centuries, 98, 101
Linka, 418
Lisbon, dancing processions after the plague in 1570, 310
Liszt, 213, 214, 220, 224
Livingstone, Dr., 65
Lo Salt, a dance of Roussillon, 284
Loangas, dance of the, 82
'Lord of Misrule,' the, 132
'Lord's Masque,' the, 170
Louis IX., 242
Louis XII., 270, 332
Louis XIII., 244, 362
Louis XIV., 217, 256, 257, 300
Louis Philippe, 378
Loures, the, 334
Lucian's treatise on the dance, 11, 36, 37, 40, 48, 74
Ludion dance, 61
Lulli, 257, 362, 363, 396
Lupercalia, the, 62
'Lurch,' the, 420
Luri, gipsy dancing girls, 214
Lusitani, dance of the, 194
Lutz, Meyer, 424

MAX

Lycurgus, the Hormos war-dance invented by, 44
Lygon, Lady Georgina, 406

Macpherson, Cluny, in a Scotch reel before the Queen (1849), 408
Madrigals, 395, 396
Maezeddin, Mogul Emperor, appointed a female dancer joint governor of the empire, 33
Mahanaim, the, 25
Maikos, dancing women of Japan, 344, 356–359
Maine, Duchesse du, inventor of the ballet-pantomime, 363
Makovitza, the, 239
Malagueña, the, 322, 330
'Man's dance,' Chinese, 352
Manhood-initiation dance of the Torres Straits, 83
Maori war dance, 69
Marcel, 367
Marcheuses, members of the ballet, 364
Margate Lancers, 414
Marguerite de Bourgogne, 257
Marguerite of Valois, 1, 251, 271
Marie Antoinette, 264, 285, 361, 368, 422
Marie Thérèse, 362
Marquesas, dance of young native girls, 92
Mary of Guise, Court festivities during her regency, 181
Mary, Queen of Scots, splendour of the masques in her reign, 181; character of, 181
Masks used by savages in the dance, 76, 79, 80
Masques, old English, 132, 138, 156, 170; in Scotland, 180, 181
Matelot dance, Dutch, 301
Mauri, Mlle., 364
Maximilian I., Pyrrhic dance performed before, by Scaliger, 44

MAY

May dance, Grecian, 58; Roman, 61
May Day dances and customs: the Morris, 136–143; remote origin of the festival, 143; Maypole dances, 143–148; 'a jolly game in Fanch-church Strett' in 1557, 143; tunes, instruments, and songs of, 146; milkmaids' dances, 146; chimney-sweeps' dances, 151; in Wales, 152; in the Isle of Man, 152; in New England in the sixteenth century, 152; of Bohemia, 288
Maypole dances, 126, 136; the Morris, 136–143; popularity of, 144; attempt to suppress them in the reign of James I., 147; in New England in the seventeenth century, 152
Maypoles, 143, 144; great size of, 146; in and around London, 147, 148
Mazarié, stage dancer, 286
Mazur, the, 227, 232, 234, 239
Mazurka, the, 397
Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Duchess of, 404
Medici, Catherine de', 8, 245, 271, 332, 361
'Medicine' dances and 'medicine-men,' 71–74; of Jamaica, 73; of American Indians, 73, 74
'Medicine-women' of the Moluches, 73
Meibom, Professor, ancient Greek dance performed by, before the Swedish Court, 44
Melville, Herman, description of a young girls' dance in the Marquesas, 92
Memphis (Egypt), celebrated for accomplished singers, 17
Mendelssohn, 334, 343
Ménestrier, Père, 26, 97, 371
Menuet, the. *See* Minuet
Menuet d'Exaudet, 259
Menuet de la Cour, 151, 259, 403, 422

MOR

Menuet de la Reine, 259
Menuet du Dauphin, 259, 261, 367
Merry-ma-tanzie, 187
Merry Mount, New England, a May festival at, in 1628, 152
Metastasio, 361
Metz, Jewish marriage ceremonies at, 32
Mexico, dances of the Zuñi, 84, 85; church dances in, 118
Middlesex, Lord, 361
Military dances, of the Goths, 137; Chinese, 353
Milkmaids, dances of, 146; accessories of the dance, 148, 149; May festival of, 149; Indian, 349
Minnesingers, the, 292
Minstrel dancing, 131
Minuet, the, 171, 256; in Russia, 239; character of the dance, 257, 422; its historical importance, 257; manner of dancing, 258; the usual dance of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, 259; example of music, 396
Mirabeau, 274
Miriam's song, 25; sung at the present day as a hymn in the synagogues, 26
Mizpirotza, the, 316
Mizva, the, 32
Moluches, 'medicine-women' of the, 73
Monferrina, the, 333, 334
Montague, Mr., in the first quadrille at Almack's, 403
Montez, Lola, 364
Montgomery, Mr. and Miss, in the first quadrille at Almack's, 403
Moquis, death dance of the, 76
Moral ballets, 363
Morisco, the, 136, 137
Morocco, wedding festivals of the Jews of, 32
Morris bells, 137–139, 186; references to in old English parish accounts, 138

MOR

Morris dance, the, 136; derivation of the name, 136; characters, costumes, and description of the dance, 136–139; its popularity, 137; usually danced round a Maypole, 137, 146; still common in some parts of England, 138, 139; danced from London to Norwich, in 1599, by a comic actor, 139; in Scotland, 140, 186; with swords, 175; example of music, 393
Morris, Rev. John, quoted, 102, 104
Mouret, 363
Mourisca, the, 308
Mouriscada, the, 308
Mozart, 261, 336, 372
Mummers, Assyrian, 23, 24
Mumming in the thirteenth century, 180
Muñeyra, the, 320
Munich old Town Hall, figures of Moorish dancers discovered in, 296
Murray-Aynsley, Mrs., on the religious dance in Algeria, 119; on the dances of the hill tribes of India, 348, 349
Musard, 284, 378
Musical examples: melody of Egyptian labourers, 16; Miriam's song, 25; Arnaöut, the (Albanian dance), 54; Isolano, the, 59; funeral song of Central Brazil, 77; dance of the Bushmen, 90; la Prose de l'Ane, 98; Bergerette, the, 100; melody played at the religious festival at Echternach, 105; Baile de los Seises, 108; ancient Danish Walpurgis dance, 122; fourteenth century English dance tune, 134; Staines Morris, 142; The Merry Milkmaids, 149; new May song (Cheshire), 151; 'Greensleeves and Pudding Pies,' 154; Joan

NER

Sanderson, or the Cushion Dance, 158; Sellenger's Round, or 'The Beginning of the World,' 160; Nonesuch or 'A la Mode de France,' 162; Scotch Brawl, 167; 'John, come kiss me now,' 168; Canary, 169; a single Jig, 204; 'Tatter the Road,' 205; 'The Humours of Caledon,' 207; Jig, 211; dance of Indian gipsies, 221; Air de la Clochette, 246; Danse de la Basse Bretagne, 250; Menuet du Dauphin, 261; 'En passant par la Lorraine,' 265; 'Gwin ar Challaoued,' 267; dance-song of the Ain, 271; Bourrée d'Auvergne, 272; La Robine, 273; Dans der Maegdekens, 275; Le Chant de la Carnagnole, 285; the oldest French dance tune, 287; Todtentanz, 298; der Schifferknechte Dantz, 301; Chanson d'Cramignon, 302; Norwegian dance, 304; Schwedischer Bauerntanz aus Upland, 304; Pordon Dantza, 311; Bolero, 323; Chinese hymn, 355; of time and rhythm, 388–398; Jig, 394; Sir Roger de Coverley, 395
Mutchíco, the, 313
Muyñeira, the, 327
'My Wife shall have her Way,' dance-song, 210
Mysian war dance, 44
Mystery plays, introduced in the thirteenth century, 96; forbidden at Cologne in 1617, 97

NAPLES, dances of, 334, 338
Napoleon I., 300
Nautch girls and their dances, 344–347; rhythm of the dance, 387
Nemours, Duc de (1630), 244
Nero, Emperor, 335

NEU

Neumann, Baron de, 404
New England, seventeenth-century Maypole dancing in, 152; progress of dancing in the next century, 176; curious names of contredances, 177
New May Song (Cheshire), 151
New Mexico, medicinal dancing rites of the natives, 74
New Year dances of North Ronaldshay, 173; ancient, 290
Newton, Sir Isaac, the Strand Maypole transferred to Wanstead by, 147
'No Flight' dance of Dakota Indians, 68
Noblet, Mlle., 369
Nonesuch, or 'A la Mode de France,' 162
Nop-jigs, 206
Norman jongleurs, 129, 136, 391
Normandy, dances and dance-songs of, 269, 270
North American Indians: buffalo dance, 67; 'No Flight' dance of Dakota, 68; scalp dances, 69, 70; 'medicine' dances, 73; Iroquois medicine-men, 74; bear dance, 78; Dakota mystery dance, 83; sun dance, 85; Dakota 'begging dances,' 87
North Ronaldshay, New Year's Day dance of, 173
Northumberland, Christmas sword dance of, 175, 176
Norwegian sword dance, 195; dance tune, 304
Noverre, ballet-master, 363, 365, 367, 371, 372
Nubia, dancing at graves in, 78
Numa, Emperor of Rome, dances instituted by, 61, 62

'O DU lieber Augustin,' the first waltz tune, 299
Obertas, the 234
Olaus Magnus, quoted, 193, 195, 268, 289, 290

PER

'Old Noll's Jig,' 202
'Orchésographie' (Jehan Tabourot's), 11, 167, 245, 249. 252, 253, 254, 255, 263, 264
Orchestic dancing, 41
Orkneys, the sword dance in 195
Orleans, Duc d' (1393), his part in the 'burning ballet,' 244
Ostend Polka, 421
Ou, the Chinese word for dance, 352
Owenson, Miss, account of an Irish Sabbath, 207–209
Owl dance of the Greeks, 52
Oxford, candle-rush or leap-candle at, 172

PALILIA, the, 62
Palmerston, Lord, 404
Palotás, the, 224
Palotéo, the, 319, 327
Pamperruque, the, 218
Pantalon, the, 316
Pantomimic dances, Grecian, 50; Roman, 63, 335, 360
'Pardons,' the, of Brittany, 266, 274
Paris, the polka craze in, 239; training of the Opéra corps de ballet, 364
Parr, Dr., a patron of May Day sports, 148
Parry, Dr., on dance music, 399
Pas de Quatre, the, 423
Passacalle, the, 328
Passamezzo, the, 164, 165, 333
Passepied, the, 249
Pavan, Pavenne, Pavin, Pavon. *See* Pavane
Pavane d'Espagne, 255
Pavane of Henri III., 254
Pavane, the, 164, 165, 187, 253, 254, 330, 333, 422
Penny weddings, Scottish, 185
Perrot, dancer, 231
Persia, the dances of said to have been originated by gipsies sent from India, 214; dancing

PER

girls of, 214, 350; present condition of the art in, 350
'Perth Glovers' March,' 196
Peru, dances of, 375
Petrie, Prof. Flinders, quoted, 18, 119; mask and ivory clappers found by in Egypt, 23, 24, 377
Petronella, Queen of Aragon, 319
Phaiakian dance, the, 36
Phallic festivals of India and Egypt, 143
Philip III. of Spain, 308
Philip IV. of Spain, 316
Philip V. of Spain, 218
Phrynichus, danced in his own dramas, 39
Piatti, Signor, 334
Planxty, the, 205
Pletionka, the, 236
Plough Monday custom in the Scilly Isles, 173
Plugge-dansen, the, 300
Poitou, dances of, 274
Poland, religious exaltation of the Jews of, 32; beauty of the national dances, 232; the women of, 233; the Polonaise, 233; the Mazur: varieties of, 234; the Krakowiak, 235; the Kolomejka, 235; dance music of, 397
Polka, the, 8, 228; origin of, 228; its rapid spread through Europe, 229; the mania in England, 230–232, 405; steps of, 230; time of, 419; description of, 421
Polka-mazurka, 419; description of, 421
Polonaise, the, 232, 233, 239, 241, 397
Polska, the 304
Pompeii, dances depicted on the walls of, 64
Pordon dantza, the, 310, 311
Portugal, Eastern character of the dances, 306; those of each province distinctive, 306; character of the dances,

QUI

306–309; dance-songs, 307; religious dances and processions, 307, 309; antiquity of the dancing customs, 308; twelfth and thirteenth century dances, 308; influence of the Spanish dominion, 308; free nature of the eighteenth-century dances, 309
Potlachs, festivals of the tribes of North-west Canada, 88
Prague, the polka in, 229
Pratinas, danced in his own dramas, 39
Prestilo, the, 309
Prévost, French dancer, 363
'Prometheus,' Beethoven's ballet, 370
Provence, dances and dance customs of, 164, 274, 279
'Punch,' on the polka mania, 231, 232
Punchinello, the, 338
Puritans and dancing, 127, 147, 171
'Pygmalion and Galatea,' ballet, 368
Pylades, Roman dancer, 63
Pyrrhic dance, of Sparta, 42, 64; its four divisions 42, 43; sometimes danced on horseback, 43; Albanian, 52; of the Spacchiotes, 58; of Spain, 319

QUADRILLE, French, 280; the figures, 281–283; the American, 283; a celebrated quadrille, 283; the first quadrille at Almack's, 403; the modern dance, 422
Queen, Her Majesty the, sword dance performed before in Perthshire, 196; as a dancer, 403, 404; at State balls in the early part of her reign, 407, 408
'Queen Mary's Psalter,' representations of dancing in, 154
Quinault, 363

RABBINIC books, references in to the Creator dancing, 94
Rain dances, 84
Rameau, 280
Ramel, General, assassinated in a farandole, at Toulouse, 278
'Rats,' beginners in the ballet, 364
'Raye,' the, 169
'Red Tiger Devil' dance of Tibet, 75
Redowa, the, 235
Reel, Scottish, 188–192, 402, 408, 416, 423; steps of, 192
Reel of Tulloch, 190
Refrains of dance-songs, 265
Reihen, the, 10, 303
Religious dances. *See* Ritual dances.
Renchilido, the, 308
Rhythm. *See* Time and rhythm
Richelieu, Cardinal, 328, 362
Rigodai, the, 270
Rinceadhfada, or Rinkey, the, 194, 201
Ring dance, Scottish, 194; German, 295
Ringmor, the, 194
Rinke teampuill, the, 200
Rinnee, ancient jig, 205
Ritual dances, 10, 93–123; dancing an accessory to religious rites from time immemorial, 93; dances of the ancients mostly religious, 93, 94; formerly no ritual without a dance, 94; the early Christians' interpretation of the dance, 94; ritual dances of the early Church, 95, 96; their degeneration, and prohibition in the seventh century, 96, 97; introduced again with the mystery plays four centuries later, 96; the church the general meeting-place in mediæval times, 97; attitude of the early English Fathers towards church dancing, 97; joined in by the priests and clergy in France, 97; ritual dances of Europe, 98, 103, 120, 290, 303, 307, 309, 327; the mediæval dancing mania, 101; St. Vitus's dance pilgrimages probably the origin of ecclesiastical dancing processions, 102, 103; present day survivals of the ritual dance, 103–116; funeral dances, 117; the ritual dance in Mexico and Chili, 118; in Abyssinia, 118; of Egypt and Algeria, 119; witch dances, 121; of the Czechs, 226; of India, 347–349; of China, 352–355; of Japan, 359
'Robine Hude,' old English May Day song, 146
'Rock of Cashel,' Irish dance tune, 199
'Rogero,' old English dance, 168
Romalis, the, 215
Romanesca, the, 334
Romarios, 307
Rome, pantomimic dances forbidden by the Emperor Trajan, 17; character of the earlier festivals, 60; but one dance known of the time of Romulus, 60; the Salian dance, 61, 94; the Ludion dance invented to divert the people during the plague, 61; May dances, 61; funeral dances, 61, 62; greater development of music and the dance as Grecian art declined, 62; rural dances, 62; the Cerealia, 62; high favour of the dance under Augustus, 63; three thousand foreign women dancers in the city of Rome, 63; eloquence of the gestures in the pantomimic dances, 63; dancing practised by the cultured classes, and taught to all young girls, 63, 64; the Greek Pyrrhic dance performed by slaves and hired dancers, 64; the ancient pantomime, 335, 360

ROM

Romerages, village feasts of Provence, 274
Romulus, only one dance known of the time of, 60
Rondeña, the, 320
Rondes, Belgian, 10, 302; French, 10, 251, 269, 270
Rossini, 284, 343
Rothschild, Baron, 33
Rouen, religious dance at, in the twelfth century, 98
Roumania, gipsy dances of, 214
Roussillon, local dances of, 284; the orchestra, 284
Royal academy of dancing, founded in Paris in 1662, 258
Royal Caledonian Ball, 404, 412
Ruggera, the, Sicilian pantomimic dance, 336
Russell, Lady Rachel, in a Scotch reel before the Queen (1849), 408
Russia, gipsy dances, 214, 219, 220; the ordinary dance of Slavonian origin, 256; wedding dances, 237; dance of horsemen, 238; the women of, 238; harvest thanksgiving dance, 239; dance of the Ukraine, 239; Court and society dances, 239; a curious ballet, 239; modern dancing, 240; ballroom customs, 241
Ryder, Lady Susan, in the first quadrille at Almack's, 403

Sacré, Madame, 406
St. Bartholomew, ball on the eve of the massacre, 246, 361
St. James's Palace, 407
St. John's Eve, dancing round and through fires, on, 122, 173, 228, 266, 309, 311
St. Kilda, dances in, 192
St. Leger (or Sellenger's) Round, 160, 169, 210
St. Vitus's dance, epidemic of, in 1374, 102, 342; curious French poem descriptive of, 102

SCA

Salian dance, the, 61, 94, 195
Sallé, Mlle., 367, 368, 369
Salmon dance, the, 186
Salome dancing before Herod, 30, 31
Salta, the, 284
Saltarello, the, 335
Sapate, surprise ballet, 363
Sapateados, the, 309
Sarabanda. *See* Zarabanda
Sarao, the, 327
Satan joining in the dance, superstitions regarding, 192, 193
'Satyre's dance,' 170
Saut Basque, the, 313
Savages, dances of, 10, 65–92; dancing a part of their daily life, 65; its religious significance, 66; character and objects of the dances, 67; courtship dances, 67; representations of the chase, 67; war dances, 68; scalp dances, 69, 70; dance of warriors' wives, 70; the dance as a means of exorcism, 70; death dances, 70, 76; dances for healing disease, 71–74; devil dances, their origin, 74–76; the use of masks, 76, 79, 80; funeral dances, 77, 78; dance costumes, 79, 80; skill of savage dancers, 81; the dance as a means of settling disputes and promoting friendship, 81–83; manhood initiation dances, 83; sun dances, 85; sword dances, 86; part taken by the sexes in the dance, 86; wedding and domestic dances, 88; trials of skill, 88; gravity of the savage dancer, 88; dance of the Bushmen, 89; the Korroborae, 90; Marquesan girls' dance, 92
Scala, the, Milan, 364
Scaliger, performed the Pyrrhic dance before Maximilian I., 44; on the sacred dances of the early Christians, 96

SCA

Scalp dances, 69, 70
Scandinavian dances, 303–305
Scarf dance, Indian, 347
Schäfflertanz, the, 295
Schifferknechte dantz, the, 301
Schönpart, the, 292
Schubert, 299
Schuhplatteln, the, 292
Schumann, 398
'Schwedischer Bauerntanz aus Upland,' 304
Scilly Isles, Plough Monday customs, 172
Scotland, prejudice against dancing in, 1, 182; the Morris dance, 140, 186; the Brawl, 167; distinctive character of the dances, 179; fondness of the people for dancing and music 179, 180; meagreness of records of early dances, 180; masques and dances of the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries, 180, 181; partial revival of the art in the eighteenth century, 183; its position at the present time, 184; wedding dances, 184; funeral dances, 185; fifteenth century dancing at fairs, 186; prevalence of the French style at the Court, 187; some of the children's games originally dances, 187; the ancient dances, 187; the Highland Fling, 188; the Reel, 188, 402, 408, 416, 423; the Strathspey, 190; reels and strathspeys the true national dances, 190; music and steps of the reel, 191; witch dances, 192; legends of Satan and demons joining in the dance, 193; circular dances, 194; sword dances, 194; dirk dance, 196; the Hornpipe, 196; demeanour of the Scot while dancing, 198; gipsy dances of, 219
Scott, Sir Walter, quoted, 140, 184, 196

SME

'Scrapies,' 219
Sean-trius,' Highland hornpipe, 197
Seccarara, the, 335
Sefton, Lady, patroness of Almack's, 402
Segadilles, the, 284
Seguidillas, the, 320, 323; character of, 325
Sellenger's Round. *See* St. Leger's Round
Sens, religious dances at, in the twelfth and sixteenth centuries, 98–100
Sévigné, Madame de, 256, 276
Seville, the dance of los Seises, at the cathedral, 106–116; gipsy dancers of, 215
Sforza, Galeas, Duke of Milan, 332, 361
Shakers of New Lebanon, religious dance of, 7
Shakespearean references to dancing, 137, 138, 140, 144, 154, 159, 164, 165, 166, 168, 169, 170, 334, 363
'Shemit,' the first reel at a Scottish wedding, 185
Shetlands, the sword dance in the, 195, 196
Shinto, the, 359
Siciliana, the, 336–338
Sicily, dances of, 335 338
Side-step polka, 421
Siebensprung, the, 296
Single jigs, 204, 207
Sioux Indians, sun dance of, 85
'Sir Roger de Coverley,' 126, 394, 395
Sixpenny jig, 203
Skákava, the, 227
Skipping dance, French, 271
Skirt dance, the, 5, 380
Sladen, Colonel, in a Burmese death dance, 76
Slaves, of Egypt, taught to dance, 20
Slow-waltz, 420
'Small' dances of China, 352
Smetana, 399

Smithfield, dancing entertainments at the old Elephant Ground, sixteenth century, 154
Smyrna, dances of, 58
Smyth, Mr. Brough, on the aboriginal dances of Victoria, 71
Snow-shoe dance of North American Indians, 81
Sonata, the, 396
Song accompaniments to dancing. *See* Dance-songs
Song inscribed under a print of 'Vestris teaching a goose to dance,' 177
Sostratus, Greek dancer, 38
Soudan, native war dance, 70; negro tune, 390
South America, funeral dance of, 117; gipsies of, 220, the Zamacueca, 375
Spacchiotes, Pyrrhic dance of the, 58
Spain, religious dances of, 106; the funeral Jota, 116, 329; gipsy dances, 214, 215, 217; the dance universal, 317; female dances prohibited on the advent of Christianity, 318; survivals of ancient dances, 319; provincial dances, 320; the Fandango, 321; the Malagueña, 322; the Bolero, 322; the Seguidillas, 325; quaintness of the dance music, 325; distinction between danzas and bailes, 326; Valencian egg dance, 326; the Gallega, 327; the ancient pageants, 327; theatrical dances, 328; the Zarabanda, 328; funeral dances, 329; modern society dances, 330; dance-songs, 330; geographical grouping of dances, 331; infants taught dancing, 373
Sparta, the Pyrrhic dance, 42; female dancers of, 47, 52; the Caryatis dance, 52
Spheristic dancing, 41
'Sprightly Phrygian,' the, 204
'Stabat Mater Quadrilles,' the, 284
Staël, Madame de, description of the Tarantella, 339
Stage dancing, 5; of the ancient Greeks, 38, 48; of Spain, 328; the modern ballet, 361; present condition of, 378. *See also* Ballet
Staines Morris, the, 142
Stanford, Villiers, 399
Starocesky, the, 227
State dancers of China, 352
Stedman, Captain, 65
Steinen, Professor von den, on Central Brazilian dances, 76, 80
Stellis spider, music said to be an antidote for the bite of, 351
Stephens, Mr., description of a Basque village dance, 312
Steps of Highland Reel, 192; of the Polka, 229, 405; of the Gaillarde, 253; of the Pavane, 254; of the Gavotte, 264; of the Bourrée, 271; of the Waltz, 419
Sterne, Lawrence, 274
Strand, the, Maypole set up in, 147; transferred to Wanstead by Sir Isaac Newton, 147
Strathspey, the, 189, 423
Strauss (the elder), 299, 378, 398, 405, 407, 418
Strauss, Edward, 407, 419
Sullivan, Sir Arthur, 272
Sully, 362
Sun dances, 85, 86, 268
'Sur le Pont d'Avignon,' French ronde and game, 250
Surprise ballet, 363
Sweden, the sword dance in, 195; religious dance of, 303; great variety of the dances, 304
Switzerland, dances of, 300
Sword dance, 86; in the North of England, 175, 176; in Scotland, 194–196, 423; of

Tibet, 195; Syrian, 195; Bohemian, 226; ancient, of Brittany, 268; German, 290; Scandinavian, 305; Spanish, 330
Syria, the sword dance in, 195

TAGLIONI, 64, 365, 370
Tahiti, wedding dances of, 88
Tailors' dance, German, 296
Tallien, Madame, 365
Tambourine dance, Italian, 361
Tamborileros, the, 316
Tañana, the, gipsy dance, 215
Tarantella, the, 72, 333; description of, 339; in Persia, 351
Tarantismos, a fifteenth-century dancing disease, 342
Tarantula spider, supposed power of dancing to counteract its poison, 341, 342
Tarasca, the, 327
'Tatter the Road,' ancient jig tune, 205
Tchinghiane, dancing festivals of the, 215
Telestes, Greek dancer, 38
Tennent, on the Devil dance of the Veddahs of Ceylon, 74
Thaletas, Grecian poet, 41
Theatrical dancing. *See* Stage dancing
'The beginning of the World,' dance tune, 160, 168, 210
'The Conquered Prejudice,' ballet, 239
'The Gout,' ballet, 244
'The Humours of Caledon,' dance tune, 206, 207
'The Hunt,' dance tune, 206
'The Merry Milkmaids,' dance tune, 149
'The Night and the Hours,' old English masque, 170
Thespis, danced in the representation of his own dramas, 39
Tibetan mystery play, 75; dances, 195, 348

Tightrope dance before James VI. of Scotland, 182, 183; performance on horseback in 1237, 242
Tigritiya, dance disease of Abyssinia, 72, 342
Time and rhythm, in the East, 387; of primitive man, 388; development of rhythm, 390; Greek, 391; of the early Christians, 391; of troubadour and gipsy dances, 391–393; of old English dances, 393; adoption of foreign dance forms, 395; the Sonata, 396; stage music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, 396, 397; modern Polish dance measures, 397; German and Bavarian, 398; Italian operatic and sacred airs arranged as dances, 399; the great masters and modern composers, 399
'Times,' the, on the polka mania in Paris, 229
Tinney, 407
Tirano, the, 330
Todtentanz, the, 298
'Tom Tyler,' old English dance, 169
Tonadillos, the, 328
Torch dance, French, 251; German, 294
Torcico, the, 315
Torres Straits, dancing dresses of the natives, 80; manhood initiation dance, 83
Torrington, Lord, the Queen's partner in an old English dance, 408
Tourdion, the, 244, 252, 253, 309
Tournaments, dancing at, 154, 294
Townley, Lady Caroline, 406
Trajan, Roman Emperor, the pantomimic dance forbidden by, 17
Trémis, French dancer, 264
Trenchmores, 164

TRE

Trescona, the, 338
Trihoris, the, 249
Troubadours, the, 248, 391
Tschaïkowski's Pathetic Symphony, 398
Tziganes, the, 220

UKRAINE, dance of the, 239
Ululate, the, 308
'Undumpisher,' the, 164
Uxbridge, Lord, the Queen's partner in an old English dance, 408

VALENCIA, dances of, 326, 327
Valse à trois temps, 418; description of, 419. *See also* Waltz
Varsoviana, the, 235
Vau de Vire, the, 270
Vaughan, Kate, 380
Veddahs of Ceylon, Devil dance of, 74
Vends, the, of Lusatia, 233
Vestris, Auguste, 365, 366, 367, 369
Vestris, Gaetan, 177, 264, 365, 366, 369, 423
Victoria (N.S.W.), death dance of the aborigines, 71
Vienna, the polka in, 229
Viking dances, 303
Vikivaka, the, Icelandic dance-song, 305
Village feasts, French provincial names for, 274
Village wakes, English, 129
Villão, the, 308
Villemarque, M. de, on Breton dances, 266, 267, 268
'Virez-vous, tournez-vous,' a dance-song of the Ain, 271
Vito Sevillano, the, 216
Vito, the, 330
Vogues, 270, 274
Volte, the, 246, 256
Voss, on the religious dances of the Israelites, 29

WEI

WAGNER, 399
Wakes, English, 129; Irish, 199; Spanish, 329
Waldegrave, Lady, 409
Waldteufel, 418, 420
Wales, May Day customs in, 152; dances of, 209; at wedding festivities, 210; curious ancient dance, 210; the Jig, 211; belief in the sun dancing on Easter morn, 211
Wales, Prince and Princess of, 409
Wallachia, dances of, 13, 52
Walpurgis dance, ancient Danish, 122
Walpurgis Night, 121
Waltz, the, 8; Russian, 241; originally a German dance, 298, 299; opposition to in England, 299; waltz music, 299, 398; introduction at Almack's, 404; changes in the, 405; time of, 419; American variations of, 420. *See also* Valse
War and warlike dances, of the ancient Greeks, 41-44; of North American Indians, 68, 70; of the Soudanese, 70; ancient German, 289; Spanish, 319; of Australian natives, 389
Warrau Indians, dance contests of the, for settling disputes, 81
'Washerwoman,' the, dance tune, 206
Washington, President, three hours' dance of, 176
Weber, 299, 343
Wedding dances, of Egyptian peasants, 23; of the Jews of Metz and Morocco, 32, 33; of Tahiti, 88; Scottish, 184; Welsh, 210; of gipsies, 219; Russian, 237; French, 274; German, 294, 296, 297; Sicilian, 336
Weippart, 407, 408

WEL

Wellington, Duke of, 402
Whitelocke, 395
Wilkinson, Mr., on the dances of ancient Egypt, 20-22
Willis's Rooms, 401, 404
Wiltshire, dancing round the harrow in, 172
Witch dances, 121, 192, 226
Women dancers of China, 354

XACARAS, the, 309
Ximenes, Cardinal, 106, 329

ZWI

YAKKA DURO, Cingalese professional devil dancer, 75
Yorkshire, sword dance of, 176
Yveteaux, M. des, 328

ZAMACUECA, the, 375, 376
Zarabanda, the, 171, 309, 328, 395
Zezhulicka, the, 227
Zorongo, 328
Zorzico, the, 314-316
Zwiefache, the 398

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